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TURGENEV

THE MAN · HIS ART · AND · HIS AGE

AVRAHM YARMOLINSKY

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Turgenev, the man--his art--and his age.

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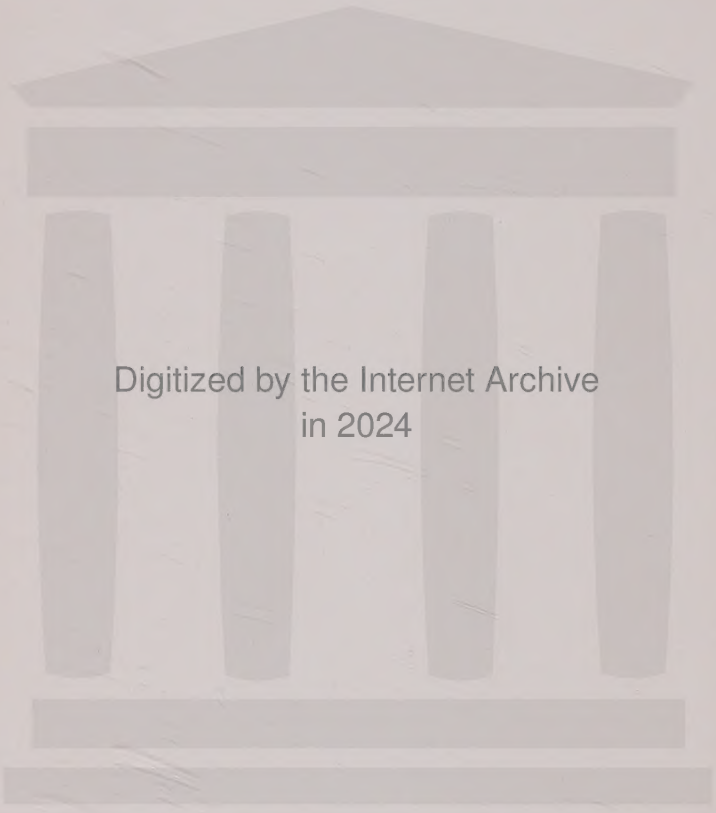
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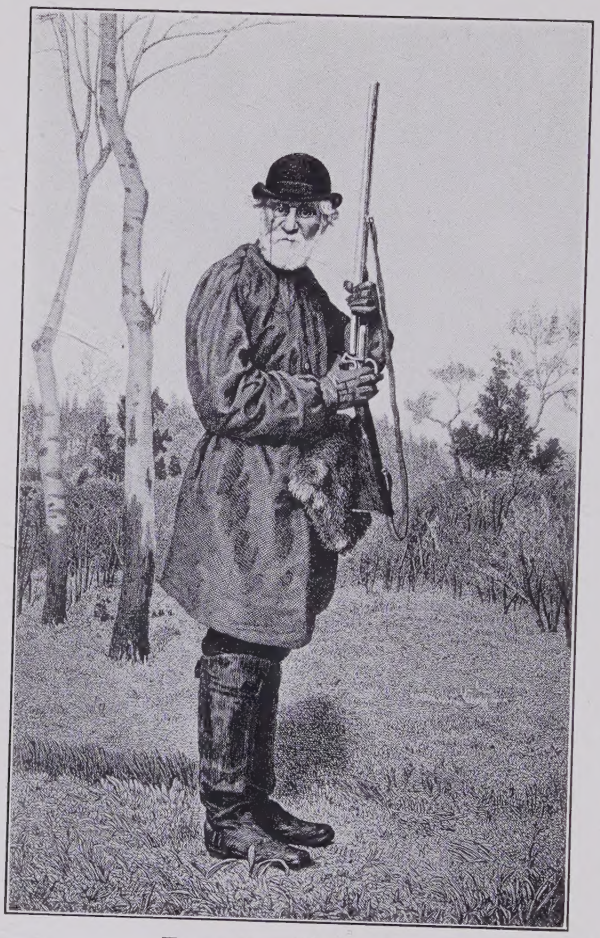
TURGENEV

THE MAN—HIS ART—AND HIS AGE



TURGENEV HUNTING

Remarque:
PAULINE VIARDOT
From a hitherto unpublished engraving

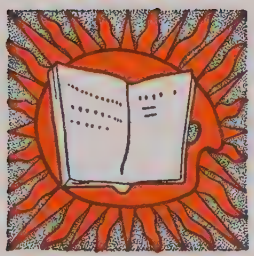
TURGENEV

THE MAN—HIS ART—AND HIS AGE

BY

AVRAHM YARMOLINSKY

ILLUSTRATED



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PREFACE

As the statements of fact in this narrative derive chiefly from sources which, being in Russian, are inaccessible to Western readers, and as the works drawn upon run into the hundreds, the author deemed it unnecessary to burden the book with references. His researches, begun in the New York Public Library, took him to the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the British Museum, as well as to the great libraries of Leningrad (Petersburg) and Moscow. He recalls with special pleasure the long hours spent during the winter of 1923-24 in the cold reading-room of the Pushkin House, not far from the ice-blocked Neva, and in the Leningrad Public Library, whose more clement atmosphere allowed him to shed his overcoat while he worked. To the administration of these two institutions, as also to that of the Library of the Russian Academy of Sciences and of the Historical Museum in Moscow, he is obligated for access to much manuscript material which yielded data presented here for the first time.

He wishes to thank the following: Professor Nikolai Leontyevich Brodsky, of Moscow, for the use of his private library and for permission to read the manuscript of a volume of the novelist's unpublished correspondence; Mr. Mikhail Veniaminovich Portugalov, curator of the Turgenev Museum at Oryol, for help in procuring unpublished pictorial material; Mr. Ivan Ivanovich Lebedev, an archivist of the same city, for unpublished information relating to Turgenev's forebears; Mr. Modest Hoffmann, of Paris, for permission to read his transcripts of unpublished documents from the collection of the late A. F. Onyegin, a friend of the novelist's; Mr. Anatoly Fiodorovich Koni, of the Russian Academy, one of the few surviving acquaintances of Turgenev's, for his interest; and Professor André Mazon, of the Collège de France, chiefly for intelligence concerning Turgenev's literary remains contained in the papers of the Viardot family, upon which he has

been at work since 1914. His catalogue of this material has been completed but not yet published. Some of the documents have however already appeared in print. They furnish evidence that the gestation of Turgenev's major compositions covered a longer period than has been believed, and that the plots were elaborated years before the novels were actually executed, a circumstance which allowed him to keep several works on the stocks at the same time. They further emphasize the novelist's reliance upon living models. The published catalogue, as Professor Mazon has been good enough to indicate in a letter received as this book goes to press, will contain a reprint of a hitherto unknown plan for an unwritten novel. The kindness of the late Henry Holt, in permitting him to read a personal letter addressed to the publisher by Turgenev, is gratefully remembered by the author. Above all, he is heavily indebted to Miss Babette Deutsch for her persistent encouragement, for the stimulus of many fertile suggestions, and for guidance in the treacherous ways of a language to which he was not born.

Dates of events occurring in Russia are reckoned by the Julian calendar (Old Style); events outside of Russia are dated according to the commonly accepted calendar (New Style), which, for the nineteenth century, is twelve days in advance of the other.

August 31, 1926

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PART I

YOUTH: 1818–50

Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!

COLERIDGE

TURGENEV: THE MAN, HIS ART AND HIS AGE

CHAPTER I

IN WHICH A RUSSIAN IS SCRATCHED

N Monday, October 28th, 1818, son Ivan—21 inches Tall was Born at Oryol in my own house, at twelve of the clock in the Morning." When Turgenev's mother made this quaint entry in her tiny memorandum-book she was a woman of thirty, yet without the mature charm generally conceded to that age. Her figure was small and neat, but stooping; her fine eyes were set in a sallow, coarse-skinned, pock-marked face, above a broad nose which was to grow blue with time, and a determined chin. It was her tragedy to be passionate without being lovable. Even her son failed to value in her the vigor of personality which sometimes compensates for a lack of physical attractiveness. He was too much oppressed by her domineering complacency to appreciate that shrewd, graceful apprehension of experience which she bequeathed to him. She wore her ego as women of another period wore their hoop-skirts, taking it for granted that people would get out of her way. In her meager person she combined a *grande dame* and a barbaric matriarch. One sees her, during her rare placid moments, moving about her

drawing-room, her delicate hands hovering over her Sèvres, her bibelots, her flowers, and alighting upon her *Imitation de Jésus Christ* —herself carefully bonneted and ruched, as she always was to every one but her maid.

Varvara Petrovna, to refer to Madame Turgenev familiarly in the Russian manner, always named her forebears with unction. Her family pride was part of the small, rigid set of traditions to which she was born. Not that she could have traced her ancestry back further than the beginnings of the eighteenth century, when these Lutovinovs began to accumulate their lands and their wealth. They did not distinguish themselves either as soldiers, as scholars, or as gentlemen. What they possessed was a violent energy, a gross self-will, rooted in generations of insolent authority. Their lettered descendant took pleasure in privately villifying these homespun Borgias. He once remarked that they were as ugly as goats and stank like monkeys. Some of the bones of the family skeletons are to be found in his stories.

An intimate of Turgenev's has, for example, identified the villains in the tale "Three Portraits" as the novelist's maternal great-grandfather, Ivan Lutovinov, and one of his sons. In the story the young gentleman seduces his sister by adoption and, finding her with child, lays the blame to her betrothed and kills that honest simpleton in a framed-up duel. In reality the crime was complicated by incest, since Lutovinov's victim was his own sister. Another well-authenticated story presents this gay deceiver as stealing the bride from her husband's bed on the night of the wedding, at which he was an invited guest. In this adventure he was assisted by his valet, Boursier, who also figures in "Three Portraits." The harsh, embittered old man in "Three Portraits," who cherishes his money-bags with a miser's affection, reappears in the story "Freeholder Ovsyanikov." He boldly possesses himself of the land of a peasant freeholder, and when the wronged man complains to the courts, he has him flogged into submission. The fly-blown, gilt-framed oil paintings of the old man, the young rascal, and his pale, black-haired sister, all hung in the dining-room at Spasskoye, the family estate.

The first Lutovinov on record had five daughters and three sons, the oldest of whom, Piotr, was Turgenev's maternal grandfather.

Varvara Petrovna Turgenev in 1816
From a hitherto unpublished portrait

Piotr Ivanovich was remembered for having taught his peasants to graft sprigs of orchard trees upon the wild apple- and pear-trees growing in the forest which encroached upon his fields. A little peasant boy, owned and picked for schooling by Varvara Petrovna, wrote in later life of having munched these forest fruits. The story that attaches itself to the novelist's maternal grandmother is less gracious. He passed on the tale that in a fit of temper the vicious old paralytic worked up sufficient energy to suffocate her young attendant with a pillow. Varvara Petrovna, however, filially remembered the virtues of the old lady, who was so far ahead of her age as to hold opinions on politics, business, and books. "My old mother," Mme. Turgenev wrote to her son Ivan, "was infinitely more entertaining than your father's mother is."

Piotr Ivanovich died before his daughter Varvara was born. With her mother's second marriage the girl's unhappiness began. She grew up a homely, gawky creature, the ugly duckling among her pretty stepsisters, and warped by her mother's odd dislike. The story goes that her stepfather made up for her mother's coldness by an unmistakable ardor, even if he beat her when he was drunk. Many years after, Varvara Petrovna took her little adopted daughter to visit the old mansion which had been the scene of her own bitter girlhood. The house was deserted and the door leading to her stepfather's room was boarded over. "No sooner did I run up to it [the door]," writes this daughter in her Memoirs, "and put my hand to the ancient copper padlock which stuck through the boards, than Varvara Petrovna seized my arm: 'Don't touch it! You must n't! There is a curse on these rooms!' Never shall I forget her voice and the way her face looked at that moment. They expressed so much fear and hatred and viciousness."

It is told that upon her mother's death Varvara Petrovna was forced to flee her stepfather's importunities. She walked some sixty versts to seek refuge at Spasskoye, the estate of her uncle, Ivan Lutovinov, to whom the family possessions had finally fallen. The relations between uncle and niece are a matter of conjecture. In spite of his hold on the purse-strings, he liked to keep open house, and there was no scarcity of entertainment for man and beast. It may have been in the rough male society which his hospitality

provided that the girl developed her masculine tastes. She preferred horseback-riding, hunting, and target-shooting to knitting bead bags and embroidering on canvas. In later years she could beat her sons at billiards. Obviously she was no dainty goose. To judge by her letters, her uncle must have offered her the advantages of the female education of the day. At any rate, she attended a boarding-school for a time. It is certain that the old man made her his heiress.

According to one account, this uncle died of grief at the news that Moscow had succumbed to the French. His great-uncle's patriotism was to be held up as a reproach to Turgenev, who ultimately settled in France, and indeed, expended his last breath there. It is a matter of record, however, that the old man died in 1813, the year after Napoleon's invasion. Ivan Lutovinov's estate comprised about twenty villages scattered through three provinces, and a vast amount of personal property. His silverware alone is said to have weighed two thousand pounds. Turgenev's mother inherited all this wealth, as she had inherited the eccentricities and savageries of her race.

Now that she could do as she pleased, the heiress spent part of the year at Spasskoye and part in the neighboring city of Oryol. Like many younger and better-favored women, she was anxious to find a husband. It was in keeping with her virile character that she should make no bones about it. One young man whom she wooed too vigorously was literally forced to flee her importunities. According to his own story, she had lured him from town to her estate, where she provided him with lavish entertainment, and on the occasion of his name-day presented him with the deed to one of her properties to which were attached five hundred souls. But Varvara Petrovna had to see her deed torn up by the very hands into which she gave it, and that night the young man secretly left Spasskoye.

It was in Oryol that she may have met the handsome young officer of the Cuirassiers who was to become the father of the novelist. He owned about one hundred souls and an unprofitable little property in the neighborhood of the Lutovinov estate. The mistress of Spasskoye was plain-looking, albeit possessed of spirit and of a vivid intelligence. Moreover, she was of a ripe age, being

indeed six years older than her suitor. But she owned five thousand souls and many thousand acres. It is reported, plausibly enough, that the lady made the advances and the lieutenant's father had to interfere to bring the young man into line. A more theatrical and less credible tale runs thus: Lieutenant Turgenev visited Varvara Petrovna to negotiate the purchase of some horses for the army; the young woman liked the fascinating officer, and with the free hospitality of those days invited him to join her in a game of cards, the winner to claim whatever he chose; the cavalier won, and demanded the loser's hand in marriage. He followed up his victory with another the next day which enabled him to name the date of the wedding.

Under the portrait of the novelist's father at Spasskoye hung a picture of his family tree. Its branches reach into four centuries of Russian history. The Turgenevs derive from a Tartar *mirza* named Turga, who left the Golden Horde, accepted baptism, and entered the service of Prince Vasily the Blind in the fifteenth century. Thus the maxim ascribed to Napoleon fits Turgenev literally. The golden star on the azure field and the silver crescent above it in the family's coat of arms refer to the Tartar origin and the Mohammedan faith of their ancestors. The Turgenevs served their princes faithfully and not without honor. One Turgenev was beheaded by Pseudo-Demetrius for his devotion to the lawful dynasty and is revered by the church as a martyr. Two Turgenevs perished in the jacquerie headed by Stenka Razin in the seventeenth century, and are vaguely remembered in their descendant's story "Phantoms." Several of them were among the gentry whom Peter the Great forced to learn the business of war from the bottom up, and one was killed in his service. Another held an important military post under Empress Anna. A branch of the house boasts a minor poet, a statesman who was also a historian, and a political writer, all sons of the rector of the University of Moscow. Romance enters the family chronicle with the novelist's great-grandfather, who was taken prisoner in one of the Turkish wars and became a slave in the sultan's harem. There, the tradition goes, a sultana was charmed by his looks and helped him to escape. An obscure legend makes this man the lover of Empress Elizabeth.

In the novelist's father the heritage of beauty was stamped with a strange femininity. A portrait of him which hung at Spasskoye has been described thus:

> In spite of astonishing dark eyes, daring and manly, it seems that this is not a man, but a woman, or better still, a demi-mondaine, arrayed in the white uniform of the Guards, and wearing a neckerchief which without a knot or a bow, is twisted about her white, swanlike throat. The glance is a mermaid's, calm and enigmatic, the lips are sensuous and curved with a scarcely perceptible smile.

Lieutenant Turgenev's grace went with an athletic build: he was a tall, broad-shouldered man; and his distinguished son contended that he inherited the giant frame of his father and the vitals of his lean, sickly mother. In his middle years his wife found in the mermaid's features a resemblance to Voltaire.

On Friday, January 14, 1816, Varvara Petrovna Lutovinov, at the age of twenty-nine, was joined in matrimony to Sergey Nikolayevich Turgenev, who was twenty-three, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. In after years she warned her young friends not to marry on Friday, because the day was fatal to married happiness.

CHAPTER II

"SHADES OF THE PRISON-HOUSE"

THE newly married pair remained in the city of Oryol for some time, and there the eldest child, Nicholas, and the second son, Ivan, were born. The third and last child, Sergey, who arrived when its parents were married five years, was an epileptic, who died young. It was just before his birth that the father retired with the rank of colonel, and it was then that the family settled definitely in the country, at Spasskoye, a village on the fringe of the province of Oryol, lying about two hundred miles southwest of Moscow, in the heart of central Russia. They made, however, extensive and frequent trips abroad—in the early years for pleasure, and later for the sake of the colonel's impaired health. The journey was sometimes made, at least in part, in a huge lumbering dormeuse of Viennese make, which had dining and sleeping-compartments, and which was drawn by ten horses. As a boy of four Ivan saw Germany, France, and Switzerland, on a trip made in the company of the entire family, and also of a young Russian doctor. At Bern the boy's career nearly came to an abrupt end when he all but tumbled into the famous bear-pit.

His early recollections fasten like lichens to the oaken walls of the wooden manor-house at Spasskoye, to the wayside chapel, and to the cemetery that lured and scared him. Every part of the great gardens was as familiar to him as the inhabitants of his green

bird-cage or the nurse who had him in charge. The boy could wander from the big house, past the rookeries in the birches, into the depths of the park, down the shelving slope to the pond where the fish rose to feed from his hand, and where the children had a little boat to themselves, or over to the orchard where the trees stood heavy with cherries or plums or apples. In the autumn he might startle the snipe that flocked toward the reddening rowans, or watch the partridge and wild duck that were later to prove his game. Squirrels, kestrels, orioles, and hedge-sparrows, violets and gooseberries—these will make a noise and a fragrance in his pages. "Oh, my garden!" exclaims, in a mood of reminiscence, the hero of one of his early stories. "Oh, the overgrown paths by the shallow pond! Oh, the little sandy spot below the tumble-down dike where I used to catch gudgeons!" And he proceeds to evoke such sights and sounds and smells as must continually have flowed in upon the senses of the young Ivan: the dark track of the wind as it moved over the golden meadow grass; the forlorn song of a peasant broken by the jolting of his cart; the humble chime of the cracked church bell; the pungent bitterness of wormwood; the sweetness of freshly mown buckwheat on the summer air.

Naturally, most of the crowded frescos of this outdoor world that were painted on the walls of his young mind, flaked off with time. These few endured until death erased them forever: the patch from which he used to steal sun-warmed strawberries; the tree from whose bough he shot his first crow; the spot where he found a mushroom of prodigious size; above all, the place where he watched, spellbound, the duel between an adder and a toad. This last horrid spectacle made the child doubt for the first time the goodness of Providence. And no amount of Hegelian philosophy from his professors later, nor earnest arguments from his devout friends, could do more than film over that subversive picture.

The boy lived in the country until he was nine years old; and found there plenty of nourishment for his growing curiosity. He had a particular fondness for pulling off the petals of a rosebud and trying to discover the core of it. It always irritated him to find that the innermost sheaths were so thin and delicate that he could not tear them off. Perhaps this practice taught the novelist to content

himself with the exquisite epidermis of reality, to draw, as George Moore said of him, only the skin from his subject.

When winter came, and the snow weighted the branches of the pines, humped itself over the low hills, and blunted the edges of the ravines, there remained a house of forty rooms in which to lose oneself. It seemed as big as a town to Ivan. He would walk around heavy oak tables, vast settees upholstered in yellow leather, cabinets filled with foreign bric-à-brac, and arm-chairs whose ebony backs were decorated with bronze cupids leading lions on lashes of flowers. And from the corner of every room he would be regarded gravely by icons dark with age, before which dim lamps were kept steadily burning. In some such setting one pictures him playing lotto with Nicholas, on a checker-board whereof the central square was "The Temple of Happiness," or, as the boy grew older, composing the geography and history of the imaginary island kingdoms over which he and his brothers ruled.

The spacious, rather homely manor was connected by galleries with two wings, one of which comprised the offices, the other being reserved for guests. If Ivan might explore the house and grounds, always under the eye of some servant, it was probably a much rarer thing for him to find the way to what one might describe as the back door of the estate. Here were the ice-houses and the smoke-house, the dairies and the wine-cellar, the pigs and chickens, the barns and stables, and at a little distance the quarters of the house serfs which hummed and clanged with the work of milling and tanning, churning and weaving. Spasskoye was virtually a self-sufficient economic unit, not unlike a medieval domain, producing all that the family ate and drank, most of its clothes, and some of its furniture. It is curious to note that another of the Turgenevs' estates housed a paper-factory which supplied the young author with the foolscap on which his first stories were written.

The Turgenevs lived hospitably, commanding a hierarchy of domestic serfs as well as the hangers-on that were to be found in every manor-house, and providing for relays of guests the pleasures of both the country and the town. The day that began with a fox-hunt might end with a masquerade, with private theatricals, or with a grand ball for which Mme. Turgenev would gown herself in some

imported confection of *tulle illusion* in which she had danced in Paris. The tendency to ape court etiquette which gives an anecdotic touch to her widowhood, must have shown itself in an earlier devotion to pomp and circumstance.

Colonel Turgenev had no hand in the affairs of his wife's household, but he seems to have had his way in affairs of the heart. If he was attractive, his own appreciation of feminine beauty, even in his wife's serfs, led him to break his marital vows with a fine contempt for class differences. We have it on his son's authority that he had a knowledge of women which made him irresistible, and it was as a tribute to this quality that the novelist called his father "a mighty hunter before the Lord."

In the story "First Love" Turgenev, if we choose to believe him, drew upon his reminiscences of the family life of his parents. The self-contained, elegantly groomed gentleman of the tale, with his spasmodically affectionate manner toward his family, his excellent horsemanship, and his Epicurean tastes, was modeled upon the author's father. Certain episodes, such as a domestic scene over his interest in a beautiful girl, and his ungallant reference to his wife's age, serve to corroborate Turgenev's assertion.

Varvara Petrovna's attachment to her husband, although deep and sincere, was another expression of her egotism. As for him, he was dependent on his homely, eccentric wife for the money he spent on his pleasures. He treated her, one must suppose, except in times of an open breach, with the consideration which his position required, and she interpreted his attitude to suit herself. Both, being sticklers for the proprieties, were interested in having their children, whom they loved, believe the decorous myth of their conjugal felicity—a myth which Varvara Petrovna elaborated when she became a widow. But one's children are less easily deceived than oneself.

To the bitterness of a dissatisfied wife, the mistress of Spasskoye added the slave-owner's habits of mind, and an inherited disposition toward cruelty. The combination was not likely to contribute to the happiness of her inferiors—her serfs or her sons. They lived in an atmosphere of feudalism not tempered by the chivalric ideal of the West. It is true that her paternalistic attitude toward the

Sergey Nikolayevich Turgenev

"souls" she owned, coupled with a managerial ability, assured the peasants a good living. At the same time she felt herself authorized to inflict anything on them, from a flogging to a forced marriage. The walls of Spasskoye witnessed not infrequent acts of despotism.

At least one such scene so impressed itself upon the memory of a small boy that half a century later he incorporated it into one of his stories. Two young peasants who were working in the park neglected to bow to Varvara Petrovna as she passed them—an offense for which she at once ordered them deported to Siberia. "Here is the window at which my mother sat," Turgenev once remarked to a visitor at Spasskoye. "It was summer, and the window was open, and I was a witness to how the two men, on the eve of their deportation, approached the window with bared bowed heads to take leave of her."

Looking back at his childhood from the height of his nineteen years, Ivan wrote: "About my childish years I know that I was a spoiled darling, but very homely, and that at the age of four I nearly died, and that I was then brought to life by old Hungarian wine—perhaps that 's why I like wine," adding, "although I don't drink much," and then crossing it out. Unlike the average man, Turgenev was not given to romancing about his early years—the period which a popular fallacy holds to be the happiest in our lives. As an old man he spoke of having been flogged nearly every day. Sitting at dinner with friends in Paris, Turgenev is thrown back into the complex of his childhood by a remark of Flaubert's to the effect that in a youthful drama of his, the latter made the people complain to Louis XI that they were forced to season their vegetables with the salt of their tears. Turgenev recalled how because of some slight misdeed he would be first lectured by his tutor, then whipped, then deprived of his dinner, finally wandering out, hungry and sore, into the park, and "drinking with a kind of bitter pleasure the salt water which streamed from his eyes down his cheeks into his mouth." He was given to exaggeration, but it is certain that his mother believed in the rod, and used it readily. Once when giving her eldest son ten strokes, she nearly fainted, and she liked to relate afterward how he stood before her with bare little buttocks, shouting, "Water, water for Mummy!"

Ivan, outraged by unjust punishments, on one occasion decided to run away from home. His German tutor discovered him stealing out of the house in the dead of night, persuaded him to return, and managed to heal the sprained filial bond. The hatred of injustice which warms certain pages of his novels must have been kindled again and again in the heart of a tormented and furious boy, who not only suffered himself, but constantly saw his brothers and his playmates, the familiar house serfs, sometimes a bastard of his father's, undergoing disproportionate punishments for trivial misdemeanors. In retrospection Varvara Petrovna flattered herself that she had treated her sons fairly. "When you were children," she wrote to Ivan years later, "you were flogged, but not oppressed. You entered the room noisily, without fear." It would seem that the mother deceived herself. The whole course of her second son's life was to bear witness to the crushing effect of her overbearing manner. It sapped his initiative in the conduct of his affairs, and his dislike of her self-assertiveness made him incapable of standing up for his own rights.

Such anecdotes as have come down to us about the active little boy with the large brow seem to show that he kept a child's fresh point of view and on occasion wagged a child's free tongue. Upon being presented by an awed mother to an aged princess, the child, inspecting her soberly, observed with penetration: "You look just like a monkey!" This early aptness of simile was of course rewarded with a flogging. At another time the boy was made to recite a fable of Dmitriev's before the author himself, a venerable old man and a third-rate writer, who was visiting the house. Not content with the rôle of performer, Ivan assumed that of critic, and remarked to Dmitriev point-blank: "Your fables are good, but Krylov's are much better." In recounting the story later Turgenev said: "My mother got so angry that she flogged me, and thereby fixed in my mind the memory of my first meeting with a Russian writer."

Dmitriev, like not a few of his mother's friends, belonged to the age of the great Catherine. Indeed, representatives of that formally courteous, suavely cynical period were not infrequently to be seen at Spasskoye, and Ivan was also being reminded of it by the ladies and gentlemen whose portraits stared at him from the walls of home.

The exquisites and the skeptics of the eighteenth century were as irrelevant to the Russian scene as a paste buckle to a bast shoe, and they themselves must have known it. This picturesque incongruity of crinolines, powdered wigs, patches, and quizzical eyebrows with coarse native rusticity, impressed itself on the boy indelibly.

The flabbiness of will which afflicted Turgenev to the end of his life must have been in part due to the cramping atmosphere of arbitrary authority which prevailed in the household, quite aside from the treatment he received at his mother's hands. So strong was her passion for regulating and labeling that her house was run with the strictness of a military establishment. She insisted upon certain formalities of speech and gesture in the children's relation to their parents and their Deity. In later years, apparently feeling that the Lord would prefer to be addressed in a civilized tongue, she made the little girl whom she had adopted start the day by reciting the following prayer: *"Seigneur, donnez-moi la force pour résister, la patience pour souffrir, et la constance pour persévérer."* In addition there was the matutinal duty of reading a chapter from *L'Imitation de Jésus Christ.* Mme. Turgenev could hardly have been less exacting in the religious education of her own children. A Spartan discipline was the educational vogue of the time, and Turgenev later asserted that his parents were influenced by the fashion in this matter. Coupled with the authoritarian spirit was the corollary sense of caste. The little masters played with the children of the serfs, but the latter were not allowed to presume upon their privileges. Turgenev tells the story of a pillow-fight with a serf-boy during which the latter was caught by Varvara Petrovna in the act of throwing a pillow at her son. The little serf, who was Ivan's best friend, was immediately sent to be flogged. Ivan's protests availed nothing. The succession of Fräuleins and Messieurs who were hired to instruct the children were treated with scarcely more civility than were the servants.

Varvara Petrovna herself had a hand in her sons' education. Her note-book for 1823 contains an outline, in the form of questions and answers, of lessons for the eldest boy. The temperamental lady had the intelligence to relate some of the questions to the child's experience on their trip abroad: "What did you see in Bern? Live

reindeer, wild goats, and four bears. Where did you live in Paris? Rue de la Paix." The answer she made up for one of her questions suggests from whom her literary son inherited his sensitive eye: "What is the color of the Rhine? The color of green grapes."

French was in common use in the household, and the main subject of instruction, but as the boys grew older Russian received a measure of attention. Colonel Turgenev in ill-spelled letters enjoined upon his sons the desirability of improving their knowledge of the native tongue. He also urged them to write their diaries in Russian at least twice a week, alternating with French and German; and it was he who asked Ivan's opinion about the correctness of a Russian phrase "because," he said, "you [children] know the grammar better than we do." Like Pushkin, and so many other masters of Russian, Turgenev owed his knowledge of the vernacular chiefly to contact with the serfs. It was probably a domestic who taught him to read and write the language. He certainly had one of the servants to thank for his introduction to the native poetry. He was about eight years old when one night, in collusion with this young serf, who had an unschooled passion for verse and was himself something of a rhymester, Ivan broke open one of the heavy old black bookcases in the nursery, and standing on the shoulders of his accomplice, drew out two enormous eighteenth century tomes, smelling of dust and rats. One of them, entitled "Symbols and Emblems," contained puzzling pictures, accompanied by equally puzzling explanations of their significance in five languages, including English. The impressionable child, having spent the next day over this curious volume, which had been adapted from the Dutch by order of Peter the Great, went to bed half-delirious: "Unicorns, negroes, kings, suns, pyramids, swords, snakes," he recalled later, "whirled through my poor head; I was an emblem myself. I 'signified,' I was lighted by the sun, I was hurled into darkness, I sat upon a tree, I sat in a pit, I sat on clouds, I sat on a belfry. . . ."

The other stolen volume, which Ivan's friend appropriated, was that grandiloquent, lumbering epic, the "Rossiade," Kheraskov's unhappy attempt at a Russian Iliad. The two naïve readers found this book a well-spring of pure delight. The fascination of those summer hours, when in some green and secret place the child listened

TURGENEV AS A CHILD

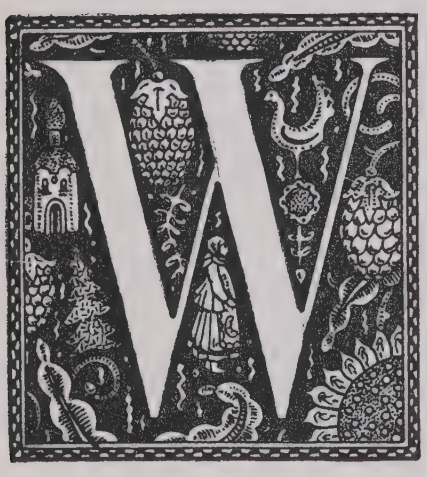
From a hitherto unpublished portrait painted about 1824

to the man thundering out these lapidary dactyls, is written down in one of Turgenev's late stories, "Punin and Baburin." The narrator is clearly Turgenev himself, and Punin has some of the lineaments of the serf who initiated him into his native literature:

It is impossible to convey an idea of the feeling I experienced, when, seizing upon a convenient moment, suddenly, like a hermit out of a fairy-tale or a benevolent spirit, he [Punin] would appear before me, with a ponderous book under his arm, and stealthily beckoning with his long crooked finger, and winking mysteriously, he would point with his hand, his eyebrows, his shoulders, his whole body to the deepest thickets of the park, whither no one could force his way in search of us and where it was impossible to find us. And now we have succeeded in getting away unnoticed, now we have safely reached one of our secret nooks, now we are sitting side by side and the book is being slowly opened, emitting a pungent odor, then inexpressibly sweet to me, of mildew and age. With what a thrill, with what an agitated and mute expectancy I gaze at the face, at the lips of Punin,—the lips from which in a moment a stream of delicious words is to flow! At last, the first sounds of the reading ring out. Everything round about vanishes. . . . No one knows where we are, what we are about, while with us is poetry, we saturate, intoxicate ourselves with it; a weighty, grand, mysterious matter is in progress with us. . . . Punin preferred sonorous, thunderous verse; he was ready to lay down his life for it! He did not read, he shouted the verses out solemnly, in a flowing, rolling outpour, through his nose, like a man intoxicated, like one beside himself with ecstasy, like a Pythian priestess. . . .

CHAPTER III

THE AMERICAN



HEN Ivan was nine years old the family moved to Moscow, where they bought a house and settled down to the usual life of the gentry who wintered in town. It was customary to come into the city for the Christmas festivities, preceded by a string of carts loaded with domestics and with the carcases of pigs, geese, and ducks which were to provide the household with provisions until the third week in Lent. It was then time to be thinking about a return to the country, before the spring thaws had erased the roads. Ivan was placed in a boarding-school run by one Weydenhammer. In those days the government schools were held in contempt by the nobility, and a gentleman's son was either tutored at home or attended a private academy. On one occasion the authorities were actually forced to close a public high school for want of pupils. That the private schools left much to be desired may be inferred from the fact that the Government, alarmed by the low standard of instruction there, opened, in connection with the high schools, special classes for the nobility, and in 1833 forbade the establishment of new boarding-schools.

The shades of Weydenhammer and his assistants dwell in the limbo of unremembered schoolmasters. Virtually the only recollection of this period which Turgenev set down is of one of those puerile savageries inevitable among children. He imagined that his

brain was covered only with skin and hair, and when he was tapped on the head, he came near fainting—a weakness which his schoolmates were not slow to discover. He always believed that his fontanelles failed to close, and joked, in later years, about bequeathing his freakish skull to the Academy. One guesses that the two years which Turgenev spent under Weydenhammer's tutelage were made up of a regimen of French irregular verbs and German vocables, a little mild fagging, and probably several violent friendships.

He seems to have recorded one such boyish attachment of his in "Yakov Pasynkov," substituting suggestively Winterkeller's boarding-school for Weydenhammer's. The narrator, palpably Turgenev himself drawing upon memories of his school-days, is a mixture of youthful snobbishness and romantic affections which rise above considerations of caste. The object of his passion is an older boy, an abandoned orphan who was kept at school out of charity and was passed over at dessert on week-days. Poetry drew the two together. Schiller's facile raptures fell from the lips of the elder into the open heart of the younger. They would desert their beds for a spring lilac-bush, and, in its fragrant shadow, talk till dawn. It is possible that in this story we have reminiscences of a somewhat later period projected upon a background of boarding-school years. When the boy was within Weydenhammer's walls, he was too young to show the vague idealism, the sensitiveness to verse, and the romantic wistfulness of an adolescent artist.

In the late summer of 1829, Ivan, together with his brother Nicholas, was transferred to the so-called Armenian Boarding-School, one of the best private schools in the city, which later became the Lazarev Institute of Oriental Languages. He stayed there only about two months. It was during this period that he started the study of English, and laid the foundation for his later enjoyment of Shakspere, Shelley, Keats, Byron, Bulwer-Lytton, and Dickens. It was also here perhaps that Turgenev thrilled to Zagoskin's novel, "Yuri Miloslavsky," which was read aloud by an instructor. The book is a historical romance of ancient Russia, in the style of a third-rate Walter Scott. The boy was so fascinated by "this miracle of perfection," as he described it later, that he hit out at a schoolfellow who dared to interrupt the story. It was his misfortune, a year or

two afterward, to meet Zagoskin as a daily visitor at his father's house: a little gargoyle of a man, with a head like a squashed pudding, bulging bespectacled eyes, and a cleft chin—prodigal of grotesque gestures and mangled French, and cherishing the delusion that he was a Samson in strength and a Don Juan in love. Thus early Turgenev discovered that an author may be the least heroic of the characters whose lives he has to live.

The three years following Ivan's unexplained withdrawal from the Armenian Boarding-School were spent at home, preparing under private tutors for entrance to the university. Some rough sketches of these gentlemen have come down to us in their pupil's hand. There was the instructor in literature with his purple nose, who was always, as the French say, "between two wines." He held the boys to a strict classic diet, having a thorough dislike of that flighty young recreant, Pushkin, "that snake with a nightingale's voice," whom Ivan, with the rest of Russian youth, already idolized. There was the German tutor, a lachrymose fellow, who could not read Schiller without crying, and who kept a common crow in a cage, as his pet. He was discovered to be an uneducated saddle-maker and was forthwith dismissed. Finally, there was the teacher of history, who combined a reputation for wit with a penchant for German metaphysics which was then just beginning to be in vogue.

Before Ivan left the hands of these pedagogues for the arms of his alma mater, he passed through an obscure crisis, such as is not uncommon in early adolescence. His own account of it years afterward, as set down by a friend who had caught him in a reminiscential mood, appears to be an unequal mixture of truth and fictive memory. "Until the age of fourteen," Turgenev recalled, "I was of small stature, obstinate, morose, evil-tempered, and fond of mathematics. At the age of fourteen I fell dangerously ill, was in bed for several months, and when I got up I was almost as tall as you see me now. The doctors asserted that I was ill because of too rapid growth. At that time I underwent a complete change: I became soft, weak-willed, fond of verses, literature, and inclined to dreaminess."

When Ivan matriculated at the University of Moscow, he was a stout, slightly stooping boy, within a month of his fifteenth birthday.

It was no sign of precocity that he entered so young, for in those days the university in its non-professional departments was really little more than a secondary school. The entrance requirements recall the recipes in an old-fashioned cook-book. They stipulate "a sufficient knowledge of one or two foreign languages in common use," added to a "grounding in history, geography, arithmetic and geometry," as well as the knowledge of the native tongue. The requirements had been raised, however, two years before Ivan's matriculation.

Having satisfied the faculty as to his eligibility, he was duly entered, and nothing remained to endure except certain formalities. A friend of the family gave his bond that Ivan would always appear in the proper uniform while in the university and that he would conduct himself fittingly, and Ivan himself signed a paper stating that he did not belong to, nor would he join, any Masonic lodge or secret society. The year that he entered there were twenty-two students and auditors in the medical faculty and thirty-six in the ethico-political faculty. Ivan was in the faculty of history and philosophy. His class consisted of thirteen students and auditors, less than half of whom were to be promoted.

The boy was good at his lessons. Diligently he parsed his Livy, read his manuals, and attended his lectures. Such mental stimulation as he received seems to have come from the one teacher who was less interested in cramming the memories of his hearers than in stirring their minds. Nominally professor of physics, he taught the young men under him Schelling's *Natur-philosophie*. For the rest, the instruction Ivan received here had to a rare degree the quality of dignified stagnation common to seats of learning the world over. The Russian university aimed, however feebly, to pattern itself on the German model, but lacked altogether the latter's freedom of teaching. It was dominated by the officialism of an establishment created essentially for the purpose of training bureaucrats. And yet the University of Moscow was one of the few democratic institutions in a country of caste and privilege, admission at that time being open to all comers, serfs excepted.

Looking back on this period, Turgenev recalled that his own professed democratic sympathies and his enthusiasm for the United

States had won for him the nickname of "the American." In the semi-autobiographical tale "Punin and Baburin" he declares that as an undergraduate he was a good republican, and hung lithographed portraits of Fouquier-Tinville and Chalier over his desk. His fellow-students at Moscow, especially the seniors, lived in an atmosphere of intellectual excitement. Ivan must have been influenced by it, although there is no evidence that he made contacts with the upper classmen, among whom were men who were to leave their impress on Russian culture. A few years later, when he found himself in their company in the lecture rooms of the University of Berlin, some of them became his close friends.

The boy was to get no more than a taste of the academic life of Moscow. And yet the flavor of it lingered with him and is to be sensed in his writings. When he had passed his examinations at the end of the first year he was temporarily transferred to his third boarding-school. His brother Nicholas was then in Petersburg. His mother was preparing to visit Germany to take the waters, and his father, who was ill, was getting ready to leave Moscow for the capital. In their comings and goings and scatterings, the Turgenevs were then leading the life of a twentieth-century family, and Ivan had an opportunity early to acquire the habit of travel which he never lost.

In the autumn of 1834 Ivan also went to Petersburg, and entered the university there. The young man, coming from Moscow, must have felt—whether contributing to his refreshment or his disturbance—the ascendancy of a new genius loci. The contrast between the two cities was even then a stock theme for wits and wiseacres. Peter's city, in its beginnings a murky dockyard on a Finnish swamp, within a hundred and thirty years had outdone in growth the seven-century-old Muscovite capital. If Moscow was idealistic, slovenly, old-fashioned, Petersburg was practical, trim, fresh as paint. It was kept stiffly aware of the proximity of the monarch, like a roomful of school-boys next to the principal's office. The very promenaders whom Ivan passed on the Nevsky, which was then still lined with linden-trees, marched in such regular formation that a sharp-tongued critic said that they could be mistaken for detachments of police. There was a severe angularity about the geo-

metrically patterned streets, about the stern buildings, the very color of whose fronts was prescribed, about the thin chilly gardens and the massive palaces.

The stamp of officialdom was heavy upon the barrack-like buildings of the University of Petersburg, where Ivan spent three rather ineffectual years. Painted the dull red of most of the palaces and public buildings of the capital, it looks out on the Neva with a façade like a narrow face on a lanky prostrate body. The corridor above the arcade where the students loaf during recesses, is so long that to stand at one end is literally to lose the other in the haze of distance. Intellectually, the place did not differ much from the Moscow institution of learning. There were the same academic fossils, who read off their lectures from manuals which they prudently concealed from their students; there was the same learning by rote. Some of the foreign instructors were better equipped, but, not knowing Russian, were forced to deliver their lectures in Latin—a language which, though it had once linked the intelligences of the Western world, was now only a cracked bucket at the well of knowledge.

The last year of Turgenev's attendance saw new blood being infused into the instruction. Courses were offered by several young Russians fresh from the hands of professors in Berlin or Göttingen to whom their government had entrusted them. One of these men, a teacher of political economy who didn't last long, was so bold as to appear in the auditorium wearing a turn-over collar and a knotted tie with flapping ends. Such a sartorial vagary must have raised the hair upon the scalp of the rector, who was given to scrutinizing the students' uniforms with the eye of a sergeant inspecting his men. He is said to have been Robespierre's secretary. He had fled from the guillotine only to pursue carelessly accoutered boys and personally to escort them out of the portals of the university building. In every respect discipline was stricter here than in Moscow.

Socially speaking, the student body was a mixed company. Sons of princes came to the class rooms attended by their governors, who sometimes interrupted the lecturer with a snore. They rubbed elbows with impecunious attic-dwellers. A classmate of Ivan's tells the story of how one such student became the talk of the town. Un-

able to pay his rent, and evicted by his landlady, he took his books and his poor sticks of furniture, and piled them in the middle of the Semenov Square, attaching a placard which read: "A Student's Apartment." In spite of the severity of academic regulations, here, as in Moscow, Ivan breathed a democratic air, but these young men's interest was in pleasure rather than in philosophy. He tasted something suggestive of the German *Burschenschaft* in the escapades, the lady-killing, and the drinking-parties enlivened by *"Gaudeamus igitur"* and *"Edite, bibite, collegiales"* sung with a strong Russian accent.

CHAPTER IV

THE METAPHYSIC AGE

LOSE upon Ivan's arrival in Petersburg his father died, after years of invalidism. Morning and evening Ivan and his elder brother, Nicholas, had been obliged to come to his bedside to kiss his limp hand. A summons to the sick-chamber at any other hour filled the boys with fear. When the end finally came, Varvara Petrovna was in Italy, taking a cure, and the children became the charge of their father's brother, Nikolai Nikolayevich, of whom Ivan was very fond, and who was in later years to become his majordomo and despoiler.

After Varvara Petrovna returned, a visitor who met her at her mother-in-law's had this to say about her: "She is the same eccentric, and is not at all unhappy. She has brought no end of dresses from abroad and flaunts them." Above all, the widow outraged her mother-in-law's visitor by what that old lady interpreted as designs upon her son, absurd enough in any case, but intolerable in a woman on the shady side of forty "and with such a hideous phiz." Whatever impression Mme. Turgenev gave her neighbors at the time, four years later she was writing to Ivan: "This [his father's study] is my grave, here I pray for your father, and talk to him mentally. Here I work, here I live in the past, on memories. It is only at the Smolensky Cemetery [where the colonel was buried] that I am happier."

Such of Colonel Turgenev's letters as have come down to us show him a solicitous, sententious parent, who went to the length of making a trip to Switzerland in order to engage a tutor for his children. His son Ivan paints him, on the contrary, as a cold, courteous *viveur*. Whichever picture is true, certainly the affection that he aroused in Ivan was insufficient nourishment for filial piety. In later years Turgenev spoke of his father with a disrespect which savored of malice. In the confessedly autobiographical story "First Love" the boy's admiring worship of his father is met by a fitful affection which alternates with long periods of chilling indifference. "I used to stand and scrutinize his clever, handsome, brilliant face . . . and my heart would begin to quiver, and my whole being would yearn toward him . . . and he would seem to feel what was going on within me, and would pat me on the cheek in passing,—and either go away, or begin to occupy himself with something, or suddenly freeze all over, as he alone knew how to freeze; and I would immediately shrivel up and grow frigid also." It is difficult to say to what extent imagination has distorted memory in this picture, but the novelist is firm on the point that the situation upon which "First Love" is built—that of an adolescent in love with his father's mistress—was his personal experience.

The object of this early passion was the daughter of an impoverished princess who lived in the neighborhood. There are vague references to other boyish amours, no less intense for being platonic. But Ivan must have been tutored in love, as he had been in literature, by domestic serfs. Even in the town house there was a constant coming and going of women servants, all of whom were at the beck and call of the young master, and some of whom were pretty.

On a winter's day in 1878, Turgenev was dining with some French litterateurs who seasoned their entrée with talk of women and love. The Goncourt Journals have preserved Turgenev's contribution. He received the spicy stories with "the somewhat *médusé* astonishment of a barbarian who makes love very naturally." When they began matching their sharpest emotional experiences in love, Turgenev racked his memory to produce the following:

I was only a boy, and virginal, with the desire which one has at fifteen. My mother had a pretty chambermaid with a stupid look, but you

know there are some faces to which stupidity lends nobility. It was a soft, humid, rainy day, one of those erotic days which Daudet has just painted. Dusk was beginning to fall. I was strolling in the garden. Suddenly I see the girl coming straight toward me and she takes me (I was her master and she—she was just a slave) by the hair on my nape, saying: "Come!" What followed was a sensation not unlike the sensations which we have all experienced. But this gentle seizing of my hair with this single word sometimes comes back to me, and the bare thought of it makes me happy.

Thus, if we are to believe the not wholly reliable Journals, Turgenev, in his first amoristic adventure, rejoiced to play the passive rôle which a Shavian paradox asserts to be man's part. That toward the close of his life he should, recalling this incident, declare it to be his most intense love experience, is highly significant for one who would draw the profile of his temperament.

The pricking of the senses was accompanied for Ivan, as for most adolescents, by an atrabilious complexion of the spirit. Sixteen is a melancholy, metaphysic age, and if there was a little dalliance in the garden, there was much vexation in the closet. One may readily believe, however, that he sucked on the thought of suicide as a small boy does on a lemon-stick, and that he played with transcendental platitudes concerning the use of life and the meaning of death as he used to play with new puppies. A youth of his feminine temper and at his age is defenceless against the atmosphere and the influence of romantic poetry. But where another might be content to mouth the sonorous syllables and the vehement sentiments, Ivan must blunt his pens imitating his idols. The literary itch had seized him before there was down on his lip. His earliest known compositions, which are in verse, are inscribed in a meager note-book entitled "Prayer-book," its thick paper covered with idle drawings in ink and pencil, notes on assigned lessons, Latin words with their German equivalents, and some sentences in cipher. The poems are puerile efforts: stanzas for an album, a disquisition on the sorrows attendant upon the seven ages of man, a ballad on a maiden thrust by an assassin into the sea, a patriotic ode, and, a curious item: an imitation of a native folk-song. A later and more ambitious work is a dramatic poem in three acts, with epigraphs from "Manfred" and

"Timon of Athens." It is a sophomoric piece, mimicking Byron's impatience with the social and divine order and showing the lineaments of its author's mind as in a quaint, indistinct daguerreotype.

Steno, the protagonist, who gives his name to the piece, is discovered on a moonlit night in the Coliseum, soliloquizing on the transience of things and the emptiness of life. These meditations overwhelm the youth, who is found in a swoon by Giulia and Giacoppo, her brother. They bear him off to their mean cabin and the girl forthwith falls in love with him. Himself the victim of unhappy love, Steno has little tenderness for the sufferings of others. To her passionate entreaty "Oh, my Steno, love me!" he replies with a harsh "Ha, ha, ha!" Within a few days Giulia dies of a broken heart, and her brother, mad with grief, kills her physician and rushes off to avenge her. But his intended victim, Steno, had in the meantime committed suicide. The lesser members of the cast are a pale, blood-stained demon, a pious monk, two airy Voices. From this gory melodrama, overlaid as it is with literary influences, both native and foreign, it is patent that the boyish author, like his hero, trafficked in philosophic questionings and agnostic negations, divined the dangers of reason left to itself, and enjoyed the pose of a spirit "bloody but unbowed Under the bludgeonings of chance."

"Steno" was begun on September 21 and finished on October 13, 1834. Its sixteen-year-old author was not a little proud of his composition, and even pressed it upon the attention of his professors. Undiscouraged by their strictures, he went on scribbling, and in the next three years wrote several long narratives in verse and about a hundred short lyrics, as well as a nameless drama and translations of "Manfred," "Othello," and parts of "King Lear." Luckily for Turgenev, none of them found their way into print. He was as imitative as an infant, and as serious about the business. The reading of Rousseau in 1835 moved him to start an autobiograhy as follows:

I turned seventeen a week ago. I want to write down all I know about myself, my entire life. Why do I do it? For two reasons. First, I have recently read *Les Confessions de Jean Jacques Rousseau* and so I conceived the idea of writing my own confessions. Secondly, having described my life now, I shall not touch this note-book till the

age of fifty (if I live that long), and then it will certainly give me pleasure to recall what I thought and dreamed of at the time when I was writing these lines. And so, having made the exordium, which is always necessary, I begin.

Unfortunately, he gave himself only one unfinished paragraph to reread at the age of fifty; at least, that is the sole page of his "confessions" that has come down to us.

For all the foolscap that he covered, Ivan did not look the part of a budding genius. At any rate, Savelich, the beadle of the university, who had seen at least half a hundred classes come and go, did not think so. When the famous author of "A Sportsman's Sketches" visited his alma mater, Savelich declared that he was surprised to hear that this Ivan Turgenev was writing books.

"This Ivan Turgenev" was as eager as any literary aspirant to hear the voice and touch the hand of the great. The briefest personal contacts with men of letters which he made during his university years remained enduringly fresh in his memory. A few days before Pushkin's romantic death, Ivan sighted him at a concert and stared so hard at "the demigod" that after thirty years he still recalled the "small swarthy face, the African lips, the grin of large white teeth, the pendulous whiskers, the dark bilious eyes under a high forehead bare of eyebrows." Gogol, Ivan knew in the unhappy capacity of professor of medieval history in Petersburg. He sat under him during those lectures to which Gogol brought Cyrano's nose, but not his eloquence. A year later, in 1836, Ivan applauded the première of Gogol's "Inspector General." He packed off Koltzov, the Russian Bobby Burns, in his own sleigh, and drove him home after an evening at the house of his professor of literature, the man who wept in the class room at the news of Pushkin's death. The drawing-rooms to which Ivan had entrance may even at this time have afforded him a glimpse of the fabulist Krylov, sitting placidly, like a Chinese god, his paunch attesting to his celebrated passion for suckling pig with horse-radish.

Mme. Turgenev did not entirely share her son's literary sympathies, but she made an exception of Zhukovsky, the ballad-writer, who, family tradition had it, had visited Spasskoye when she was a girl. Besides, he held the post of tutor to the Czarevich. At his

mother's instance, Ivan went to pay his respects to the poet on his saint's day, carrying him a present of a cushion on which was embroidered a maiden in medieval costume, with a parrot on her shoulder. The boy wandered through the dreary corridors of the Winter Palace, stumbling upon motionless sentinels, and when he finally found himself in the great man's presence he was in such an agony of embarrassment that he thrust the cushion at Zhukovsky without being able to produce a syllable.

On his own account Ivan paid a call upon the youngest poet in Russia, to whom, he was pleased to discover, he was distantly related. The girl, who looked less than her sixteen years, and still wore her hair in curls down her back, had just had her first book, called "Essay in Verse," crowned by the Academy. Having armed himself with a commission from one of his aunts, and having, probably, draped himself in one of the wide Spanish capes which were then fashionable, Turgenev presented himself to the mother of the prodigy, as the maid explained to him that her mistress insisted on being the first to receive the daughter's callers. The lady was unfortunately blind and so she could not fall a victim to the outward and visible charms of the tall young man whose colored spectacles made his eyes look twice as blue. She consented, however, to let him see her daughter, Elizabeth, the success of whose talent he "wished to promote." The mother received these advances coldly. She frowned upon the idea of a literary career for Elizabeth as a danger to the child's religious welfare. The visitor hotly assured his newly found relative that it was sinful to deprive society of the fruits of genius. Before this bold championship Elizabeth dropped her eyes to her black silk apron. But Ivan was not asked to call again. And the young poetess in due time became a nun, like Liza in "A House of Gentlefolk," of whom she is said to have been the prototype.

At home, life went on with no grave disturbances. The last years of her husband's life were difficult for a woman who was impatient of invalidism and whose conjugal affection was not as strong as her self-love. Varvara Petrovna must have felt the colonel's death to be in the nature of a release. Thereafter she built up all her emo-

tional life upon her children, especially Ivan. There was, indeed, something morbidly exaggerated about her maternal passion. She was intelligent enough not to demand that her second son should give her all his affection. But she was so fond a mother and so overbearing a woman that she could not help impairing the weakest element in his make-up, his will.

The widow, who wore her weeds with a certain coquettishness, was a harsher and more eccentric woman than the wife. It was usual for great ladies to have a large retinue of servants, but Mme. Turgenev was reputed to have called the page who handled her mail her Minister of the Post, and to have designated her butler as Minister of the Court. One of the duties of the court minister was to announce her sons to her. She had her own police force on her estates, and with a feudal contempt for officers of the Government consented to see only the highest local officials. The story goes that she received the rural chief of police while in her bath, denying him even the dignity of manhood. According to another anecdote, reminiscent of the French seigneur who ordered his vassals to silence the frogs that interfered with his slumbers, Varvara Petrovna had her serfs divert the course of a stream which, in forming a waterfall, disturbed her night's sleep on a visit to one of her villages. A scarcely more credible story has it that this remarkable woman insisted that since her porridge was most palatably cooked in a village ten miles away, it should be brought to her hot by a relay of horsemen. It is impossible to prove that these, and many similar stories told about Varvara Petrovna, are untrue. The young democrat must have been continually offended by his mother's despotism and her affectation of feudal pretensions. Yet he was fond of her in a mild way. Unequal to the task of combating her severities and vagaries, he simply withdrew, an attitude which sorely vexed her.

Neither his mother's conduct, distasteful as it was to him, nor yet his fits of *Weltschmerz,* seem, however, to have seriously affected Ivan's youthful buoyancy. He had a histrionic streak which he never lost, and a strong liking for fun and mystification. We catch a glimpse of the grown boy teaching his small adopted sister what he called "frog Greek." Standing her on a table in a classic pose, he

makes her repeat the chorus from "The Frogs": *Co-äx, co-äx, co-äx, Brekekekex co-äx,"* first in the solemn accents of tragedy and then in a high, thin, rapid voice. The performance ends in a burst of laughter which brings Varvara Petrovna to the scene, full of reproaches for such *"rire bourgeois!"*

CHAPTER V

THE IMMACULATELY CONCEIVED

WAS convinced," wrote Turgenev in his Reminiscences, "that in Russia it was possible to get only preparatory instruction and that the source of real knowledge was abroad. Among my teachers at the University of Petersburg there was no one who could shake this conviction." Accordingly, in May, 1838, less than a year after he received the degree of "candidate," amounting to a baccalaureate, he went to Berlin, the new Athens, to finish his studies. His mother consented to part from him because she flattered herself that he would thus prepare to play in public life a rôle befitting a descendant of the Lutovinovs. She filled the moon-calf's purse with rubles and his ears with as many if not as wise injunctions as Polonius bestowed on Laertes, warning him above all not to touch cards, a command which was the first he disregarded. On the morning of his departure the whole family went to the Kazan Cathedral, where a mass was said for the safety of the traveler. During the entire ceremony Varvara Petrovna wept bitterly, and on her return from seeing him off, indulged in a swoon.

It was customary in those days to go to Germany by sea. The young man therefore embarked for Lübeck on the good ship *Nicholas I,* accompanied by a retainer who enjoyed Varvara Petrovna's complete confidence, and who happened to be a bastard of her husband's. This Porfiry, who was anywhere from seven to ten years

older than Ivan, somewhat resembled him in feature and was of an even more generous stature. The mass was not altogether efficacious. When the vessel was off port, it took fire. Forty-five years later Turgenev set down an account of the affair with a wealth of detail which bears witness to his prodigious memory. He states that in his fright he promised one of the sailors, in his mother's name, ten thousand rubles if the man would save his life. When the first panic was over, he perched on a stairway from which he could easily have sprung into the water. While he was sitting there, looking at the flame-lit foam and pitying himself because he must die thus early, a simple old woman, thinking he planned suicide, begged him to give up his intention. The romantic notion so appealed to him that he made several pretences of leaping into the waves. But he soon became ashamed, and desisted. He noted that the women behaved more bravely than the men, and for the rest of his life he was to embroider on the theme of woman's larger courage.

His account of the disaster gives the impression that he recovered his nerve quickly, and in fact was something of a hero. The rumors which reached Petersburg at the time, however, had the bulky young gentleman cut an inglorious figure. It was drawing-room gossip that the captain had to restrain him in his dash for the life-boats, and that he cried out in a thin voice surprising in one so corpulent, lamenting his untimely end. His mother wrote to him quoting reproachfully the reports concerning *"ce gros M. Tourgénieff qui se lamentoit tant, qui se disoit mourir si jeune."* The fire destroyed the ship, but Ivan sustained no more serious injury than this blemish upon his reputation.

He spent some three years abroad, with an interval of several months at home in the winter of 1839–40. He matriculated at the University of Berlin. The shadow of classical antiquity still hangs over its marble corridors and dull lecture halls, although little remains of the zest for the humanities which gave Turgenev his lasting taste for Vergil and Homer. Like the pedantry which walled up that enthusiasm, the massive structure incloses a small courtyard, planted with elms and acacia, looking rather fragile and embarrassed against the heavy stone. The austerity of the buildings would be impressive were it not for the Greco-Roman divinities who frown

down from the walls and who seem to have substituted beer and sausages for their proper ambrosial diet.

Moscow and Petersburg had scarcely done their duty by the young student. While he was taking Roman Antiquities with Zumpt and History of Greek Literature with Böckh, he was cramming Greek and Latin paradigms in the privacy of his room. He notes with nice precision that the voice of the geographer Ritter contrasted pleasantly for him with the bird-like whistle of Ranke the historian, with Zumpt's antediluvian bellow and Böckh's lisping purr. To the soothing noise made by the last-named lecturer, he wrote letters, appropriately enough in hexameters, about a friend's love-affair with a pretty scrub-woman. His chief intellectual interest was in philosophy, that is, in the German philosophy of the day, dominated as it was by the systems of Schelling and Hegel. His diligence is attested to by his note-books, one of which shows clearly the trend of his studies. While Boehme and Schelling get respectively one and a half and one page, Bacon is accorded half a page, and Hobbes a single line.

The young man, however, would break away abruptly from "The Phenomonology of Spirit" to train his dog to catch mice—an absorbing occupation in which he was assisted by his attendant, Porfiry. Or one might discover Ivan teasing a kitten by tying paper to its tail, or again, with the faithful Porfiry, engrossed in playing at cardboard soldiers. Porfiry was a person of voracious appetite—he was not uncommonly served with two dinners—and amorous disposition, and Ivan would employ his German (the language in which his earliest known letter is couched) in writing love-missives for his smitten servant. Indeed, the man was more of a companion than a valet to the student—a relation which elicited Varvara Petrovna's reproaches.

Among Ivan's more expensive amusements the theater and the opera played a large part. He had, like his mother, a passion for music and the stage. The hero of Turgenev's "Faust," speaking of student days in Berlin, recalls Fräulein Clara Stich, and Seidelmann in the part of Mephistopheles—celebrities of the day whom Ivan himself often went to hear. These, as well as two rival prima donnas, received the young man's noisy ovations, which he mentioned

to his mother, who wrote back with more force than elegance: "Do not yell in the theaters the way you brag about!" Then there were the farces at the Königstadt Theater, the excitement of masked balls, the excitement after them, the stir and color of town festivals. In one of his stories ("Asya") he describes a student fraternity carousal such as he must himself have witnessed.

There are always ways for young men to spend money, and Ivan was quick at discovering them. The letters which Varvara Petrovna addressed to her son contained repeated references to his spendthrift habits, which were the chief theme of his brother's letters as well. His mother begged him to keep some account of what moneys he had left at the end of each month. She preferred to learn about his balance rather than about the height of the Strassburg Cathedral. In 1838 he cost his mother twenty thousand rubles, but the following year she cut his allowance, still leaving him a handsome sum, and in three months he managed to spend nine thousand rubles. In 1840 there was a terrible famine in Russia, and a ruinous fire at Spasskoye which led his mother to declare that she could not keep the young man abroad any longer. These circumstances may have reduced his allowance, but apparently did not appeal to him as a reason for incurring no further debts. When he left Berlin to go home in 1841 he owed one hundred and fifty *écus* to a German banker and three hundred to the Russian ambassador in Berlin.

To her warnings and reproaches, his mother added the weighty burden of her passionate affection. "You are my star," she writes. "My life depends on you. . . . Like a thread in a needle—where the needle goes the thread must follow." The essential meaning of passion, both etymologically and psychologically, is suffering. Varvara Petrovna tries to convey the pain of her own love for her two sons by the homeliest metaphor. "I love you both passionately, but differently. You especially wound me. . . . If my hand is squeezed it hurts, but if my bunion is stepped on, it is intolerable." During Ivan's absence she makes the following entry in her journal, as usual, in French: "Jean is my very own sun. I see nothing but him, and when he is in eclipse I can't see any more. I don't know where I am any more."

There is a touch of more than eccentricity in her expressions of

Turgenev As A Student
From a water-color made in Berlin in 1838 or 1839

tenderness. On one occasion she addresses Ivan as *"ma chère fille, ma Jeanette,"* and goes on writing: *"Vous êtes ma favorite*—Ssh! for Heaven's sake, let nobody hear it." Again, she refers to herself as his "most tender father and friend." Her maternal absorption in Ivan leads her to a flat denial of any intrusive paternity, as far as his procreation was concerned: "I alone conceived you," she writes on May 6, 1839, "all that I am, you are." Both mother and son liked to indulge in such exaggerations. Certainly they differed in many respects. What they did share was a neurotic temperament, a strong sentimental strain, and the literary gift with which the son was to delight the novel-reading public, and with which the mother regaled her few ungrateful correspondents, and, posthumously, a handful of more appreciative scholars.

As one reads her ill-spelled, nervous, pithy, shrewd epistles, sprinkled with French phrases and redolent of an acrid personality, it seems plain that Ivan inherited his talent from this delightful termagant, who latinizes for the sake of her son, and who enters into trenchant discussions with him on books, ideas, and amours. She gives him the news of the household. His dog Napol "looks as much like his father as your brother does like his, or you like me. Fine comparisons!" The queen bee was caught in the rain and dried by the drones: "She stretched her legs with an air of dignity, played the coquette, feigned extreme fatigue. Oh, women!" adds Varvara Petrovna, "you are the same in all creation, loving to please and to be admired." Uncle Nicholas is cock of the walk. The little adopted daughter, Bibi, is growing into a real little English girl, the type Ivan dislikes, neither shy, pale, nervous, nor languid, but "gay as the April sun." She is such a good little girl that one "could n't have made a better one out of wax."

His mother follows his travels eagerly, recalling her own experiences abroad and upbraiding him for his blindness to the fine details of the European scene. "You are like a government courier dashing along toward his destination." When Ivan is in Switzerland Varvara Petrovna exclaims over his not being impressed by the mountains, and his failure to mention the Swiss cream, the white veal, the cheese. "I do not recognize my son or his gastronomy." And she adds serenely: "Your uncle is afraid that while in Bern

you may commit *de l'inceste*. When he stayed in Bern he was very friendly with the girls there, and that was sixteen years ago." She keeps an eye on Ivan's studies, but she frequently reminds him that she sent him abroad not only to get learning but also to acquire social polish. She insists on knowing the status of his friends and laments his failure to make connections with the right people.

Ivan's share in the correspondence with his family has not been preserved, but one gathers from the letters which he received from home that generally speaking he wrote when he was in need of money. Toward the end of his stay in Berlin his mother heard from him so rarely that she was reduced to the ignominy of inquiring about him of his friends. He was a slothful boy; he was absorbed by new interests and contacts; he was at an age when one's family seems to be little else than a nuisance. Although at first he complained of loneliness and strange faces, he could not have been sorry that so many hundreds of miles separated him from the domestic complex.

Uncle Nicholas was the major storm-center. He was managing the estate for his widowed sister-in-law, who one day protested that she loved him as her soul, since he reminded her of her dead husband, and the next denounced him as her enemy. Ivan, though siding with his uncle, had no desire to come home to take his part. There were periodic invasions of Spasskoye by Mme. Turgenev's relatives-in-law, who ate and drank, and worried her to such a degree that she said she would have preferred to stay alone and see her shadow on every wall. She complained to Ivan that they tried to wean his brother away from her by all sorts of insinuations, especially about the paternity of her adopted daughter, Bibi, adding that they were dealing in a pack of lies, and that her sons could say of her, "as the Lutovinovs said of their mother: 'a sainted woman was our mother.' "

In fine, the young man's attitude was aptly characterized by his brother in a letter in which he conceives Ivan to apostrophize the family thus: " 'Cruel fate has decreed that I should be born a man of 1941, but live in 1841. The people with whom I have to associate, that is, my near and dear, are therefore just one century behind me. And so I say: Good-by. Keep well and happy, but don't for-

get my twelve thousand a year. Farewell, farewell' "—concluding with a bar of music.

Sometimes Ivan used his verse as a substitute for letters, a procedure which his mother resented. The vanity of the young poet had to suffer, for she was an opinionated critic with old-fashioned tastes, who did n't mince words: "You, my friend, are like a deaf man singing mass. I cannot understand poems without rhymes." Here was an unappreciative family. When Ivan, being ill, wrote home that he was hesitating between Paris and Italy, his brother replied: "That a sick man goes to Paris for treatment is intelligible, but tell me, please, what do you want to go to Italy for? Are you a musician or a poet? I don't understand it."

The demand for some word from the callous Ivan is never absent from his mother's letters. She threatens to whip an adopted child for her son's failure to write to her. "It is a pity," she adds. "He is a dear, good boy, and I teach him, and he is clever at his lessons. But what 's to be done? The poor boy will have to suffer. . . . So do not bring me to this injustice." Provoked by Ivan's inattention, she writes, "If philosophy chills us and makes us careless of our sacred duties, you'd better not study it." The strain of hysteria which seems to be her sign manual is written all over these sheets. Not seldom they read like the letters of a neglected and importunate mistress. "You are an egoist of egoists," she declares. ". . . I know your character better than you do yourself. . . . I prophesy you: you will not be loved by your wife. You do not know how to love. That is, you will love, not the woman, but your own pleasure."

What Varvara Petrovna especially clamored for was a chatty letter, such as she herself well knew how to write. On one occasion she gives him a detailed account of her day, retailing how, on awaking, she washes her eyes with a mixture of rum and tea, how she makes her devotions, and follows these by telling fortunes with cards between two cups brewed from the Chinese weed, and more gossip of the same sort. She continues:

Here I am, sitting in the drawing-room all dressed, eye to eye with my second son. You do not know him. He is a great rascal, is too lazy

to write to me, and when he does write, it is as though only to fulfil his duty toward his mother. . . . I know him as I do my own self. . . . He has the kindest of hearts, but the passions, the passions are ready to get hold of him and he yields to them, although if he wished he could master them better than a cold-blooded man.

The portrait which Varvara Petrovna kept on her desk was a water-color made in Berlin in 1838 or 1839. It shows a romantic, well-fed young man. The brooding melancholy eyes dominate the round, mild, handsome face, with its broad brow and soft, thick hair parted on the side. The somewhat lax, almost feminine face of a youth accustomed to a sheltered, ample, and uncoördinated life.

CHAPTER VI

THE LAY SECTARIANS

URGENEV came to Berlin with an idea of Germany derived chiefly from German books. He found that the city was populated not with the figments of Goethe's and Schiller's imaginations, but rather with plump, neatly dressed, pusillanimous Philistines, their empty guts stuffed, in the words of the first poet, with pitiable fears and hopes. He did not dislike the natives, and indeed established a number of contacts with them, but chose his friends chiefly from among his own countrymen. The group to which he attached himself included some young men who had been his upper classmen at the University of Moscow.

There had been two sets there. One was absorbed in philosophical interests, while the other, centered about a certain Alexander Herzen, was engrossed in what was for them the no less abstract problems of the socio-political order. The members of the first were intent upon perfecting their own immortal souls, the members of the second were concerned with the business of perfecting society: more concretely, with effecting a political revolution in Russia, such as the rebels who had stained with their blood the snow on the Senate Square in Petersburg, in the winter of 1825, had vainly striven for. Both, but especially the first group, were impatient of partial improvements, and would have nothing less than the complete realization of their superb, exacting ideal.

While the callow politicals were nourished on French thought, to the young philosophers in the wilderness of Moscow manna fell in the shape of German metaphysics. In the latter part of the thirties they were offering Hegel the cumbersome uncritical homage which a later generation was to accord to Marx. They could not meet a common drunk on Mokhovaya Street, without seeing him *sub specie aeternitatis*. On the other hand, as Herzen tells us, a disagreement on the attributes of the Spirit bruised friendships, and contrary opinions on the Absolute Personality were taken as personal insults. They gushed, quarreled, embraced, exchanged confidences, with the facility of school-girls, and at the same time they took their philosophy with religious gravity.

Indeed, these young Hegelians constituted something in the nature of a lay sect, small, irrelevant, hopelessly isolated. Yet although they spoke an esoteric idiom in which "Spirit," "Nature," "Reason" were recurrent and almost interchangeable, the meaning of their cloudy words was real enough. They believed that it was their mission to transfigure life until it approached the image of perfection.

Like little hothouses, the minds of these young men nurtured in a soft, secluded air the generous idealism which was to inform Russian thought for the remainder of the century. They had few and lean newspapers to read, and no serious weeklies; there were no political parties whose antics they could watch, no club committees on which to serve; no cafés in which to loiter. And so they spent their long leisure in abstruse studies, elaborate love-making, letter-writing, and talking. The intensive and fruitful cultivation of the art of argument was one thing which they had in common with those ancient Athenians who, kept like themselves by the labor of serfs, had no use for the more practical arts.

The "spiritual perspectives" that their talk opened up to them are suggested in the following passage from Turgenev's first novel, where he evokes the Moscow circle:

> Philosophy, art, science, life itself, were all mere words to us—even concepts, if you like, alluring, beautiful, but scattered and isolated. We were not aware of any common bond between these concepts, we did n't sense any common law of the universe, although we talked about it vaguely, and tried to form some idea of it. . . . Listening to Rudin, it

seemed to us that for the first time we had grasped it, that common bond, that the curtain had at last been lifted. Let us admit that it was n't his own ideas he was expressing. What does it matter? Order and harmony entered into all that we knew, whatever was scattered suddenly assembled and composed itself into a whole, grew like an edifice before our eyes. Everything was illumined, and informed with spirit. . . . Nothing remained meaningless, fortuitous; everything expressed a rational necessity and beauty, everything acquired a clear and yet mysterious significance; every separate phenomenon of life sounded like a chord of music; and we ourselves, filled with a kind of sacred awe, and shaken with a sweet emotion, felt ourselves to be living vessels of the eternal truth, its instruments, summoned to achieve great things. . . .

Turgenev happened to fall in with some of the members of this Hegelian circle, who, like himself, had come to Berlin to drink *ex ipso fonte* (for this city was still the source, although Hegel had been dead some half-dozen years). The personality which dominated this group was the "heavenly" Stankevich. This white-faced, weak-chested youth attracted men to him by a kind of spiritual magnetism. Turgenev always remembered the black hair tossed back from the slanting brow, the delicate, twitching nostrils of the Roman nose, the large, gnarled, old man's hands on his stick, and the native distinction of the youth, "as of a King's son ignorant of his origin." Stankevich had the laughter of a child and a conviction of right which his friends did not resent because there was no self-vaunting in his didacticism. He had been in Berlin a year when Turgenev reached there, and the two soon came to know each other, meeting often at the house of the Frolovs.

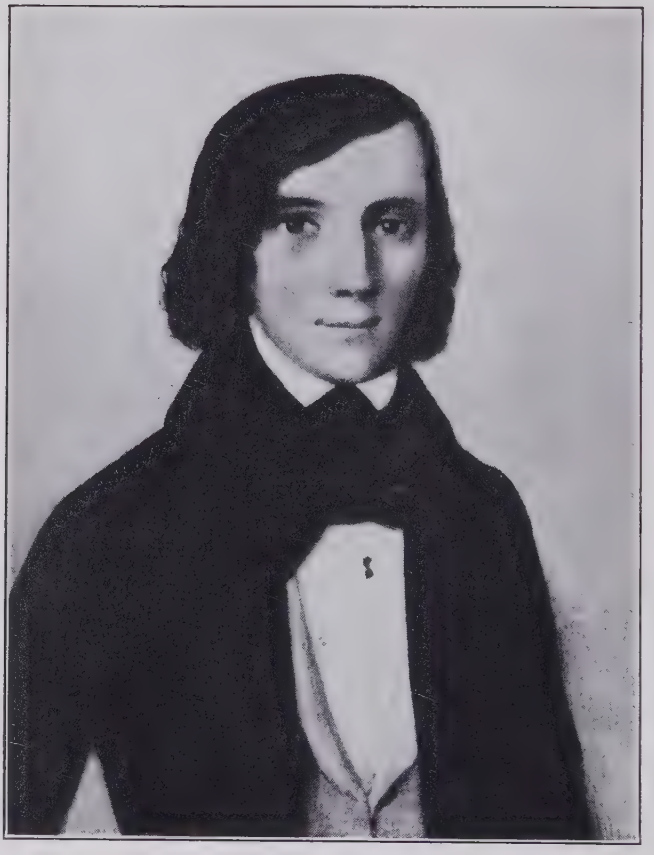
The drawing-room of this Russian family was something of a salon, presided over by a homely hostess who had about her the charm of a French lady of the eighteenth century. Here Turgenev gaped at the great Humboldt, beheld his own Professor Werder beaming with child-like confidence upon a world safe in the pink cotton-wool of his metaphysics, and watched Varnhagen von Ense putting spokes into the wheels of Bettina von Arnim's conversation. The lady was on the shady side of fifty and dyed her hair, but she could still, unwittingly, twist Turgenev's heart, for had she not been Goethe's friend? He wrote her name on the fly-leaves of his books,

as he often did with the names of his idols, and in his first novel the leading character reads Bettina to the heroine.

The latter part of 1839 Turgenev was forced by his mother to spend at home. A friend in Berlin kept him informed of events of interest to him there: a torchlight procession commemorating the Reformation, the latest operas and plays, a new statue on the Museum Square. In January of the following year, with the snow flaking from his sledge-runners, he traveled towards Vienna, and thence to Italy. By March he was in Rome. The Roman sun, on its rare appearances, caught in its mild amber long-remembered days. It was here that Turgenev again met Stankevich, who had come to Italy to die. In Berlin he had regarded the immaculate idealist, who was five years his senior, with respect verging on awe. Years later he attributed this attitude to an inner consciousness of his own "unworthiness and mendacity." Moments of self-abasement alternated for him, as they do for most young people, with moments of self-confident abandon. In the case of Turgenev, the sense of his own inferiority was to outlive his youth.

In Berlin, Stankevich had been kind enough to "the fatty with the complexion of old linen," as Turgenev then described himself, but had been slow about liking him. Now an unexpected intimacy sprang up between the two, although there was some condescension on the part of the older man, who was impatient with his friend's "frivolity." Accompanied by a couple of other young Russians, they "did" the city together, with the aid of Nibby, the Baedeker of the day. They wandered through the galleries, Turgenev quoting appropriate passages from the Russian poets, and Stankevich admiring the art of the ancients and looking down on them because they did not ask beauty to be more spiritual. They visited the Villa Borghese, where Turgenev chased lizards. They drove out to pay their respects to dignified ruins, and one evening as they passed an ivy-covered heap of stones on their way from Albino, Turgenev made Stankevich pale by summoning the ghost of the divine Cæsar with a shout.

There was music, too, a young Pole who was a friend of Liszt's being of the company, and, since the smell of paint was in the air, drawing-lessons, which Turgenev turned to account by making



Nikolay Stankevich

caricatures of his friends. For nearly a month painting was the stock subject of his conversation. Finally, there was the sixteen-year-old Chouchou, who was stopping with her parents at 57 Via dei Pontefici. Stankevich played duets with her and Turgenev wrote a poem for her, a copy of which he kept for eighteen years, to incorporate it then in one of his novels. He also married her in his dream. The young man was a susceptible young man. He was quite ready to listen, if with a touch of skepticism, while Stankevich expounded his view of love as the fullest and noblest mode of being, belonging to the religious order of experience.

With this friend, whom he saw daily, Turgenev would talk endlessly, of art, of antiquity, often of death. He was just then at the mercy of formless dreams and conflicts, in a mood, which was to grow increasingly familiar to him, of unrest and dissatisfaction with himself: "barrenly pensive," as his own words have it. Stankevich, on the contrary, seemed to have reached in his last days the serenity of an Eastern mystic, although his lawgiver was not Buddha, but Hegel. Perhaps for this reason he involuntarily offered Turgenev the peace that he needed.

Whatever Stankevich thought of his young friend's capacities, they were sufficient to bring him into close contact, especially in his formative years, with those of his contemporaries who shaped the intellectual life of the country. The ardent Hegelian himself epitomized the character and the intention of the generation, usually referred to as the idealists of the thirties, which adopted Turgenev as a younger brother. Stankevich affected those who came after him not through any tangible works, but through a faith strong enough to impress itself on his immediate circle. He believed man to be the crown of that sacred edifice which was the world. To him the universe presented itself as the manifold aspects of a single, immutable Idea, which in man attained to the supreme state of self-consciousness. The whole creation was moving toward a far-off, divine event: the mating of the fully developed psyche with the cosmos. He made Turgenev aware of an adumbration of that superb moment whenever they walked through a gallery, saw a monk telling his beads, discussed an agronomical treatise, or analyzed a friend's love-affair. Art, science, love, and particularly religion,

were the precious gifts of the all-wise Goodness which ruled their rational world.

For Stankevich, as for most of his fellows, philosophical concepts had a magic way of changing into moral precepts. History being the unfoldment of Reason, he felt that it was his duty to make his own life as reasonable, and therefore as noble as possible. He demanded the utmost of himself in the way of expanding his knowledge, disciplining his spirit, educating his moral being, governing his conduct, as the universe was governed, by the divine principles of reason and beauty. To Stankevich, as to his generation, culture was an intimate matter which concerned the individual and nobody else. He had no eye for the problems of man in relation to society. When a friend suggested that one starving beggar was enough to upset the harmony of Nature, Stankevich dismissed the notion summarily. "Such questions never arise for me. Spirit and Reason prevail in the universe. This makes me feel easy on every score." Absorption in the task of personal improvement inevitably leads to the consideration of man's social duties, a quarrel with the imperfect world ensues, and sooner or later the young philosopher's frail heaven crumbles. But Stankevich did not live long enough to travel this road together with Turgenev and his other comrades. The brevity and the resultant consistency of his life made more impressive the single lesson of spiritual discipline he was allowed to teach.

By May, Turgenev was back in Berlin. Before he reached the capital he managed to touch at Leghorn, Pisa, Genoa, take in the Kingdom of Sardinia, sail on Lago Maggiore, travel to St. Gotthard in a sleigh, visit Lucerne, Basel, Mannheim, Mainz and Frankfort, all within thirteen days. In the same brief period he lost an umbrella, a cloak, a box, a walking-stick, a lorgnon, a hat, a pillow, a pen-knife, a purse, three towels, two neckerchiefs, two shirts, and, for a little time, his heart. He wrote an account of this hectic trip to his Berlin friends from a Frankfort café "to the thunder of billiard balls," and under the influence of a bottle of Altmanshauser.

A few weeks later he heard Werder read a poem which the good professor had composed upon the death of Stankevich, his beloved pupil, his "apostle." Turgenev's own grief was no less genuine for being voluble. In passing the news on to a friend, he indulges in

those platitudes of mourning which so curiously comfort the comfortless. The letter ends appropriately: ". . . Let us come together, join hands, stand closer. One of us, perhaps the best, has fallen, but others are arising and will continue to arise. God's hand does not cease to sow the seeds of great strivings, and sooner or later light will conquer darkness." Two months later Turgenev was writing to his Berlin friends from the birch woods of Marienbad. The letter, which mixes German and Russian, turgid philosophy and genuine wit, holds the following solemn passage:

Do you understand the birth and development of my soul? How eagerly I listened to him [Stankevich]—I, destined to be his last comrade; whom he initiated into the service of truth by his example, the poetry of his life, his words. . . . He enriched me with silence, the gift of fullness, me, the still unworthy one. . . . I have always keenly felt the fascination of Nature, the breath of God in it. But in its splendor it seemed to reproach me, poor, blind, and full of futile doubts as I was. Now I joyfully stretched out my arms to it and before the altar of the soul I pledged myself to be worthy of life. . . . My enemies have left my own breast, and feeling myself a whole man, I am joyfully ready to wage war against them.

This exalted self-confidence was to be of brief duration. Not again was Turgenev to feel himself "a whole man." The letter concludes:

Stankevich! to you I owe my rebirth. You offered me your hand and showed me the goal. And if perhaps at your very end you doubted and scorned me, an attitude which I deserved because of my own petty and overbearing behavior, now you know me, and you see that my strivings were earnest and disinterested.

Exactly what their goal was, is not clear, but these youths managed to believe that they were on their way.

CHAPTER VII

SALAD DAYS

N the title-page of my encyclopedia [Hegel's Encyklopädie der philosophischen Wissenschaften im Grundrisse]," runs another passage of this same voluminous epistle, "I wrote: 'Stankevich died on the 21st of June, 1840,' and below: 'I made the acquaintance of Bakunin on the 20th of June, 1840.' Out of all my former life I wish to retain no other memories." That there were other things he wished to remember is evidenced by the fact that on the margin of the same book is the addresse of a café on Unter den Linden.

At the time when Ivan had been attending classes at the University of Petersburg, Michel Bakunin, a retired artillery officer, had roomed with Stankevich in Moscow. Both were then deep in Kant and Fichte. And now Michel, having come to Berlin in the spring of 1840, was to share living-quarters with Ivan throughout the next academic year. The two blue-eyed giants struck up a friendship at first sight, and were soon on terms of complete intimacy. Within six weeks of their meeting, Ivan was writing to Michel: "Stankevich united us, and death will not divide us." Assured of the essential rightness of the world by his Hegel and his Goethe, and by a family of five sisters and five brothers who religiously echoed his dicta, the future anarchist was in those years vociferously at peace

with life. Turgenev gave Bakunin not the worshipful admiration which he had earlier accorded Stankevich, but the warmer affection of an equal. Michel, who had long insisted that one should build one's life on philosophical principles, had for him the added distinction of a man inclined to put his theories into practice, a quality bound to attract a person of the opposite temperament like Ivan. Obviously referring to Michel, Ivan wrote from Marienbad to his Berlin friends: "I see a man, at first timidly, then with faith and joy, going up a steep mountain crowned with eternal light. With him goes a comrade, and they press onward, leaning upon each other, and from the sky shines a quiet moon. . . . His heart is light and joyful, and he believes in the attainment of the goal."

Exalted ideas about human worth, the nobility of womanhood, and the divine essence of love, lived in closed compartments in the heads of Turgenev and his friends side by side with the reflections of the average sensual man. Their moral ideas were so impossibly high as to be out of sight as far as the conduct of some of their affairs were concerned. In fine, they were lusty young men and lived as young men have done since Adam's fall. Turgenev's unpublished correspondence includes two scrawls in ill-spelled German, addressed "To my dear friend Turgenev,—Well-born [*sic*], from his Lina." In one of them she writes that she would like to wander by his side all her life, but that he does not even give her a thought. She goes on to say that she is deep in debt, and has been forgotten "by you all." She had once refused a kindness which he offered, but now she makes a claim on his good-will, and remains his "dear friend" Lina or Carolina Foerster. In the second letter she says that she called upon Turgenev but did not find him at home, that she is "no merry little Lina any more," and that he should please tell her when she may come to him.

It is presumably the same Lina who figures in a letter to Turgenev from a fellow-student, dated Berlin, October 7, 1840. Ivan was then in Dresden recuperating from an illness, and inveighing against his fate, which he described neatly as a ghastly old hag with a bulbous nose and a cudgel in her fist, constantly moping in a corner with a threatening air. His correspondent, after mentioning that he has written a dissertation dedicated to the memory of Boehme, that he

has lost a book to Bakunin in a game of cards, and that "the fierce Bohemian of Krausenstrasse" has laid another friend low, goes on to speak of news "more terrible than Napier's invasion," namely, that he is reported to be the author of Lina's pregnancy. He denies the charge vividly, and confesses horror at the prospect of paying the mother three thalers a month for fourteen years: "with that money one could put up a magnificent cross to Börne [a baptised Jew], or build a small charitable institution." The victim of the fierce Bohemian writes to Turgenev about another mutual acquaintance, one Bertha, and projects an affair with a fourth young woman, named Amalia, while yet another friend mentions "the three graces" in Berlin, and a certain Mariechen into the bargain.

Ivan did not hesitate to confide to his mother some of the more intimate incidents of his life. With her characteristic flightiness she reproaches him for treating her, rather than his uncle or his brother, to these confidences, only to declare in an ensuing letter that she is his proper confidante, and has always been a comrade as well as a mother. In the rôle of a comrade, Varvara Petrona, like Ivan's male relatives, and indeed, most of the gentry of the day, inclined to treat lightly the dangers incident to light loves. Learning that Ivan was out of health, Varvara Petrovna was filled with anxiety not due to the suspicion that he suffered from what she called "man's disease," but rather to the fear that it might be his father's illness, gallstones.

Yet the mother had her moments of panic. "Oh, my God!" she writes to him in March, 1839, "why did n't I show you, when you left, the lines which your father wrote *'d'une main égarée avec ses larmes'* the very day he was paralyzed: 'My son,' he wrote, without naming him, 'take care that you do not infect your blood, take care that you do not poison your body.' "

One affair of Ivan's which, as far as we know, marks the beginning of his more serious amours, is freely discussed in the correspondence between him and his mother. The object of his affections was one Mme. Tyutchev, who was well past her first youth—a fact which delighted Varvara Petrovna, who had just been reading the latest French novel, *La Femme de Quarante Ans,* by Charles de Bernard. In this romance, which she pressed upon her son's atten-

tion, a young man of twenty, coming from the provinces, is introduced by his uncle to a woman of forty, that she may annex him and make a man of him. The uncle believed, and Varvara Petrovna with him, that such a woman, with a good social position and a distinction of mind and manners, offers all the guarantees demanded of one to whom a parent confides a child. A younger woman, he argues, would have made the boy commit many follies, an older one would have rendered him ridiculous; with a bourgeoise he would have lost the tradition of good society; with a courtesan he would have wasted his substance. On the other hand, the lady is rewarded for educating him by the temporary happiness which he gives her.

Mme. Turgenev writes to her son on December 16, 1838:

Speaking of sugar, let 's talk of something sweeter. . . . Of the end of your letter, of your little love-affairs, of Tyu——v . . . That 's news. . . . I read it in your heart before you did, and I began to write to you myself. . . . Am I a mother like others? . . . I am always with you, and all for you, and all yours. Well, thank goodness, I am not fat. . . . It seems to me that you wouldn't love even your mother if she were fat.

She continues pointedly:

And sometimes it seems to me that as your first love was naturally your mother, pale, sallow, nervous, so you are accustomed to love sallow women. This is all right for little love intrigues, but a sallow wife is not very savory.

She goes on at great length about the distinction between love and coquetry, and the inequalities in love, adding that the balance of happiness is on the side of the lover rather than that of the beloved, and candidly concluding: "Although this agrees entirely with my own thoughts, it is taken from *Eynerley,* by Alphonse Karr." Varvara Petrovna was given to quotations and allusions even more than was her literary son.

The affair came to an abrupt end with the death of Mme. Tyutchev in the spring of 1839. Varvara Petrovna, condoling with Ivan on the event, writes:

I always wished you the love of an experienced, middle-aged woman. It is such women that educate the youth. It is a mutual advantage. The woman is flattered, and the man has the benefit of her experience. I am sorry for the Tyutchev woman. She must have been intelligent. You would n't have cared for a fool.

The mother cannot resist this opportunity of indicating that she wants Ivan when he marries to give her a daughter-in-law who will be not only young and obedient, but beautiful as well, for the sake of the honor of the house, and of the race.

Before coming home to hear more talk about the house and the race, Turgenev had a crowded winter of glorious life. As though guessing that the season of 1840–41 was to end his career as a student, he had planned to fill it with lectures and music, debates and books. There were late vigils in his room, where he clung to the stove and Bakunin to the divan. Deciding that their life was too abstract, the two would plunge into reality by paying calls together, the plump Ivan wearing his green velvet waistcoat and the lanky Michel a lavender one. They must have swum, occasionally, through the clouds of tobacco-smoke that thickened the air of Hippel's famous *Weinstube* on Friedrichstrasse, seen its lights reflected on the high forehead of Max Stirner, and mouthed the names of the other radicals who frequented the place.

After a Beethoven symphony they would drop in to see Michel's sister Vareñka, whom Stankevich had loved and in whose arms he had died. It was to her that Ivan presented on New Year's Day, 1841, eight neatly copied poems by Lermontov, the poet of the hour. At Vareñka's they discussed things great and small over smoked tongue, Russian tea, and sandwiches, from which butter dripped as tallow from the candles whose sputtering Ivan imitated to the full satisfaction of the company. There, one Sunday night in December, Werder helped celebrate his own birthday by delivering the prologue and first act of his poetic drama, "Christopher Columbus." And then there was the bi-weekly gathering of the Russian contingent, either in the third-floor chamber which Ivan shared with Michel, or in the room of another friend, where they would sit till the small hours of the morning, filling their stomachs with cold meat and

their ears with hot arguments. What reads like an account of these gatherings is given in this passage from "Rudin":

> Imagine a party of five or six lads gathered together, one tallow candle burning. The tea was dreadful stuff, and the cake was stale, very stale; but you should have seen our faces, you should have heard our talk! Eyes were sparkling with enthusiasm, cheeks flushed, and hearts beating, while we talked of God, and truth, and the future of humanity, and poetry. . . . Often what we said was absurd, and we were in ecstasies over nonsense; but what of that? . . . It was already gray morning when we separated, moved, happy, aspiring and sober (there was no question of wine among us at such times) with a kind of sweet weariness in our souls, and we even looked up at the stars with a kind of confidence as though they had become nearer and more comprehensible.

Turgenev, although he did not always relish the memories of these evenings, contributed not a little to them. And while not all his fellows thought as highly of him as did his room-mate, he had moments of proud anticipation which recurred more infrequently as his achievements solidified. The preceding year he had written to Michel, mentioning two of his friends who had died: "But you will live and I shall live, and perhaps both of us not for naught." Bakunin lived to be a flea in the ear of the established social order: a life of sound and fury. Turgenev lived to write a dozen books, the receptive, responsive, inward life of the artist, who, with the thinker, alters his environment with what little permanency it permits.

CHAPTER VIII

LOVE, CARNAL AND SPIRITUAL

VAN had been abroad hardly four months before he was confronted with the possibility that the letters from home might be supplanted by the presence of his mother. Almost every envelope he opened contained the threat of an imminent descent upon him. Early in 1839, having heard that he was ill, Varvara Petrovna wrote: "... Whether you like it or not, I leave Spasskoye and I go abroad on the seventh of May. Wherever you are I 'll find you and I 'll go back with you. Alive or dead, you 'll bring me back to Russia, and alive or dead I 'll bring you back into the family and deliver you into your brother's hands."

This visit, like others, was postponed, but she could not give up the notion of meeting her son abroad, pouring tea for him from the samovar she would bring with her, going under his escort to the theater, spending a spring with him in Italy, and then triumphantly bringing him back to Russia to settle down. In the end, however, she did not go, and Ivan finally paid a reluctant visit to his importunate parent, starting for home in October. By January, 1840, as has been stated, he was again off for foreign parts, and again his mother renewed her cry of "Come back, come back!" mindless of his protest that in summoning him home she wanted to pluck an unripe fruit.

While Ivan was in Rome with Stankevich, one of his friends, who had a brother in Moscow, sent him this injunction: "If you see

Mme. Turgenev . . . give her my compliments, but keep her from going to Italy." She had established herself in Moscow, where she bought a house, but she was willing to give up her home for the deserts of Arabia, if she could but meet Ivan in them. Her lamentations are not surprising in view of the fact that sometimes she did not hear from the wanderer for two months together. On one occasion she was forced to send a servant to the Bakunins to inquire about him. In consequence, one of the sisters wrote to Michel to tell Ivan that he must be more filial. "If you don't come home in May," she wrote in January, 1841, "I shall die of grief in June." Her untimely end was averted by the prodigal's return.

At Spasskoye Ivan found great changes. With the exception of one wing, the old wooden manor-house had gone up in smoke. He had been in Rome when the fire occurred, and a letter from home had told him how it started. One of the women in charge of the cattle had fumigated a sick cow by burning certain roots in an old bast shoe. In accordance with the prescribed magic practice, she had buried the shoe full of hot ashes under the threshold of a stable. It is not known whether or not the cure was effected, but the structure caught fire and the flames spread to the manor itself.

Ivan's home-coming to what was left of his mother's house occasioned a general holiday. Varvara Petrovna busied herself thinking up ways of spoiling her learned son. The menu was arranged with due regard for his preferences, such as tripe soup; and great jars of currant jam, for which he had not lost the taste in spite of his twenty-three years, were sent up to his room. For his part, "Jean" was affectionate and attentive.

At first he must have rather enjoyed the familiar sights of manorial Russia,—the sleepy ponds with their lazy swans, the bonneted grannies skimming caldrons of jelly under the trees, the spacious white mansions with their classic columns, the fat poodles, the old servitors, the drowsy flies, the general air of imperturbable placidity, and leisure to eat and sleep in order to eat again. But his pleasure in all this was spoiled by memories of the busier, brighter, freer life of western Europe.

Besides, the household had scarcely served up the fatted calf when feasting gave place to domestic fury. In the autumn the

elder brother secretly married his mother's chambermaid. Varvara Petrovna never forgave Nicholas the mésalliance which struck so painful a blow at the roots of her pride. She refused to support him, thus reducing him to the meanest circumstances. Not realizing that he was actually married, she was outraged by the way he flaunted what she conceived to be a shameful liaison.

Galled by the publicity of the affair, she wrote to Ivan, who was then in Moscow, with her usual bluntness, that one does not carry one's night-pot to the theater even if it happens to be silver; hers, like Trimalchio's *matella,* which figures in the "Satyricon," was of that metal. Ivan was given the ungrateful commission of bringing his brother to reason. Varvara Petrovna asked him to take Nicholas to the grave of their father on the ninth anniversary of his death, and kneel down in the mud, if necessary, not to rise until Nicholas swore to give up his disgraceful alliance. If he agreed, Ivan was to hand him their father's watch. "If he says it would kill him, as he wrote to me," concluded Varvara Petrovna, "then I would rather see him dead and pure, than alive and thus sullied." This was an impossible charge for one who, like Ivan, believed in the dictates of the heart, and who was, moreover, party to the secret of the marriage. It is true, he never found that quality in his sister-in-law which induced his brother to marry her.

During the summer Ivan himself had had an ephemeral connection with a pretty seamstress of his mother's—an affair of brief duration and lasting consequences. On April 26, 1842, he became the father of a girl who was baptized Pelagea. Inasmuch as he was content to leave it a strictly private matter, Varvara Petrovna was not at all distressed to discover the wild oat that her shiftless "Jean" had sown. This was neither the first nor the last of the young man's affairs with women beneath his caste. One such relation with a serf girl had preceded his departure to Berlin. While he was abroad he learned that she had been sent away from Spasskoye. Fearing that she was being persecuted, he wrote home asking that she should be given money and her freedom. His mother replied that far from persecuting the girl, she had totally forgotten her, and exclaimed:

What a funny one you are, Ivan! Why should I reward and free an old girl who bore children both before and after? A small bill is enough for her. It is not as though she had presented you with her virginity. That is my opinion. . . . I did not see any guilt in it, either on your side or hers. It 's merely physical passion. . . . You sinner! you have made me sin, too. Such stuff as I am writing the first Monday in Lent!

When it came to the little seamstress, however, Varvara Petrovna was at pains to ship her off to the city. But the culprit was recalled when her child was born, and the two became the objects of the dowager's ridicule and the servants' maltreatment. Both sons had failed lamentably of the careers which Varvara Petrovna had planned for them, and it is conceivable that she unconsciously visited her disappointment upon her gratuitous grandchild. Ivan himself showed no interest either in the little Pelagea or her mother.

Simultaneously with this "merely physical" affair, Turgenev was engaged in a rarefied, metaphysical romance of a more exacting nature. The lady in the case was one of Bakunin's sisters: Tatyana —a frail, high-strung spinister of twenty-seven, concealing, behind a pure brow and a stream of philosophical talk, the potentiality for hysterical self-abandonment. She had been receiving the spiritual homage of her brothers' male friends and the jealous adoration of Michel himself, but, as she confessed to him, she thought that she would meet her ideal only in heaven. As a matter of fact, she met him under her paternal roof, in the person of Ivan Turgenev.

He had been eager to know the Bakunins, and had commanded Michel to give him a letter to his family, saying, "Tell them nothing about me but that I love you." Accordingly, when Ivan was preparing to go home in May, 1841, Michel sent an encyclic to the brothers and sisters in Russia, telling them in detail about this great friend of his, with whom he had worked all winter long, from six in the morning till late at night, and who had shared both joy and grief with him and Vareñka, who, for her part, loved him as a brother. Michel commended Ivan further as a master story-teller and said he would act upon them like a cordial. Varvara Bakunin herself in an earlier letter from Berlin had spoken of Ivan as "a pure, bright, gentle soul."

It was not until October that Turgenev went to see the Bakunins on their estate, near the town of Torzhok, remaining with them almost a week. One of the brothers wrote of this visit that "every moment of these six days contained an eternity." Ivan enchanted the family, including those members of it whom he met in Moscow. They adopted him as their "new brother." "In his presence," wrote Nicholas Bakunin, "all the capacities of the spirit are quickened as by living fire, and seize upon things eagerly." As for Ivan, he called them "my children" and felt for them an affection slightly tinged with superiority. He splendidly sustained his reputation as a raconteur, thrilling an audience less skeptical than his biographer with such tales as that of a moonlit night spent in the ruins of a castle on the Rhine in the sole company of a bottle of Rhine-wine.

It was natural that Ivan should flee from the importunities of his mother to the respectful admiration of these contemporaries of his. Indeed, his first Christmas at home, for which she had waited so eagerly, he chose to spend two hundred versts away from Spasskoye, with Michel's people. One of the brothers had notified the rest in advance by letter: "On Thursday, December 18th," he wrote gleefully, "will proceed from Moscow to Torzhok two Bakunins, one Turgenev, one dog and the moon." Varvara Petrovna, outraged by Ivan's absence at this time, wrote to him bitterly: "If you become estranged from me, will the Bakunins console you?"

It is certain that his hosts provided him with all the entertainment possible. Perhaps there were wrestling matches, such as took place between him and one of the Bakunin boys in Moscow, when Ivan was thrown and made the floor quake. Surely there was dancing, and Ivan was in despair, because, although he had a piano in his Moscow apartments, he had not learned to waltz. There must have been sleigh-rides and walks, and probably fond exchanges that verged on love-making. For—a circumstance his mother did not know, being no longer in his confidence—this visit to Michel's family was in a sense a sentimental journey.

It seemed to be the fate of Michel's friends to become romantically involved with one or more of his sisters. There was Stankevich, who had been hopelessly loved by Lubov, to whom he had been temporarily affianced, and who had subsequently returned the

passion of Varvara. There were Belinsky and Botkin, both destined to become Ivan's intimates, who lost their hearts to two other Bakunin girls. There were Turgenev and Tatyana.

His affair with her began almost with their first meeting and dragged on for two or three years. Its only tangible relic was a scanty correspondence, wordy, passionate and humble on her side, and, so far as we know, glowing but non-committal on his. In her trilingual epistles, innocent of punctuation, written sometimes to the accompaniment of a storm, and at such romantic hours as midnight and dawn, the girl tossed between avowals of sisterly or maternal affection and protestations of a deathless passion, between surrender to her fate and rebellion against its ingloriousness, between serenity and despair. She would forecast a marvelous future for him and in the next letter scold him for being an insincere phrase-maker and pleasure-seeking trifler. She cried over his responses, whether they were gentle or, as frequently happened, rather dry. Tatyana, demanding a hero, and patterning him on her brother Michel, could not help making Ivan uncomfortable in requiring him to fill that arduous rôle. Her "Christ," as she liked to call Turgenev, was not eager to take upon himself the burden of a passion which he had found it titillating to encourage.

He took pleasure in disserting upon his feeling for her. He submitted his verses to her, sometimes with a dedication. He deferred to her critical opinion as in later years he was to defer to that of other friends, habitually distrusting his own judgment. In one of the lyrics which he sent her, he spoke of the "eternal moments" which the poet and presumably his correspondent had lived through together, and of "the day of salvation" when they would fully understand each other. He called her his Muse, but retreated from the prospect of any less ethereal relation. He wrote to her:

I never loved a woman more than you, although I do not love even you wholly and profoundly. . . . For you alone I would like to be a poet, for you, to whom my soul is bound in an inexpressible, marvelous way. Oh, if at least once on a spring morning we could walk under a long row of lindens, if I could hold your hand in mine and feel that our souls were mingling and that everything alien and morbid was vanishing, everything mean was melting away forever. . . . You may still build

upon me as upon a silent cliff, within whose innermost stone heart true love and emotion are locked.

Unfortunately, Tatyana could not content herself with the part of Egeria. Her emotions were wrought upon to an extraordinary degree. She was literally love-sick. The family, seeing her peak and pine, sent her to Moscow for medical treatment. But her condition was only aggravated: long nights of crying were followed by spells of nausea. Ivan, too, was in Moscow and all through that winter he kept coming to see her and sending her "touching, agitated letters." The more she saw of him, the more clearly she realized that he would never offer her the love which he had seemed to promise her in the beginning. Looking back on the affair ten years later, she recalled with undiminished content the miracle of the early days of their intimacy. Of that time she wrote:

I lived with my whole soul, my whole heart, every little nerve shook with life in me, and everything around me was transfigured. . . . I was never as happy again. There is no greater joy for a woman than such love, with which the whole heart trembles in the breast, and the whole soul like a bottomless sea.

In the same letter she sums up the matter by stating that Turgenev imagined a passion which he did not truly feel, and that she had responded too naïvely to the affection which his words and glances falsely conveyed. Upon the margin of one of his messages to her she scrawled a more bitter comment:

Strange, how some people can make themselves believe anything they please!—how the most sacred things are a toy to them!—and how they don't hesitate to send another's life to the bottom. Why can't they ever be honest, earnest, and simple with themselves—and with others? Have they no notion of truth and love?

The affair was naturally an open secret in a circle which was given to analyzing minutely the sensations, desires, and actions of its members. One of the young women who moved within it was at pains to write to Michel about Tatyana's trouble, and even suggested that there was cause for his breaking with Turgenev.

Michel waited, however, to hear his sister's story directly from her. Had n't he, in his New Year's greeting to her in 1842, recommended Turgenev to her especially? "Let him be a brother and friend to you," he had written; "that 's my blessing for you and my New Year's gift, and you must accept it because I 've always been your spiritual father." Surely he could n't have so grossly misjudged the man.

In due time came Tatyana's account, in which she took care to defend before her brother the man with whom she was in love. Writing to Tatyana in April, 1843, Michel expressed his satisfaction in the fact that his first informant had presented the matter in the wrong light. He must cease to believe in a man before he was willing to break with him. He was no slave of conventional ideas. He knew Turgenev. If the man had weaknesses, they were the fault of his youth.

Immaturity alone is not enough to explain Turgenev's reprehensible behavior. Nor do the facts that Tatyana was three years his senior and that her most enthusiastic admirer conceded beauty only to her dark-blue eyes, quite account for his falling off. Turgenev, though content with beauty unadorned by any mind, liked clever women even if they were homely. He had been drawn to Tatyana because of the aura which clung to the philosophical family. It was the very virtues by which she had attracted him in the beginning which repelled him in the end. He was beginning to shed his romantic preference for pale, languid, nervous creatures. By the spring of 1843 he was scornfully calling a woman of Tatyana's type "a metaphysical dumpling."

In 1841 Turgenev was trying to make a true Christian of Nicholas Bakunin. A year later it was said that he sponsored Alexey Bakunin's conversion to a mundane way of thinking. Writing to this convert of his in January, 1845, he observed that there were natural causes for his breaking away from the Bakunin family, and that even when he had still been close to them, he had abandoned the realm of fantasy and begun to live in the world as it is. Reaction against the ecstatic unrealities that had bewitched him in his Berlin coterie was bound to assert itself with the sobering effect of the Russian scene, and with them went his cerebral romance.

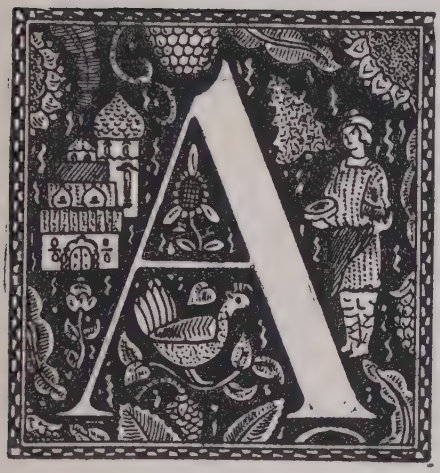
An old maid who falls in love with a student is sketched into the background of one of Turgenev's stories, written years later.

She at once rushed into an active and ardent correspondence with him; in her epistles, as was fitting, she consecrated him to a noble and beautiful life, offered "the whole of herself" as a sacrifice, demanded only the name of sister, elaborated descriptions of nature, mentioned Goethe, Schiller, Bettina and German philosophy, and finally drove the young man to blackest despair. But youth asserted itself: one fine morning he woke up with such a ferocious hatred for "his sister and best friend" that he nearly gave a thrashing to his valet in his passion, and for a long time afterward all but bit at the slightest allusion to "exalted and disinterested love."

It has been suggested, plausibly enough, that this is a simplified and soured version of the author's affair with Tatyana Bakunin.

CHAPTER IX

THE POET



S a student in Berlin, Turgenev had at odd times cherished the notion that his studies might lead him to a chair of philosophy. The notion tickled his mother's vanity, and she got Nicholas to pull the necessary wires. As a first step toward the realization of his ideas, in March, 1842, Turgenev requested the University of Moscow to examine him for the degree of Master of Philosophy. The chair of philosophy being vacant there at the time, he went to Petersburg to take his examinations at his alma mater.

In the apartment of his brother, who was putting him up for the few weeks he was to be in the capital, he came upon some of the smoothest weeks his life was to hold. He had a fine room, with a fireplace, three arm-chairs, quantities of pillows, and a desk with a lamp. The days began well with excellent tea, drunk out of large English breakfast cups, and delicious rolls. They wore on through placid hours, in which he lounged and crammed, warmed by the open fire, lulled by the dancing snowflakes outside, vaguely exhilarated by the profundities and promises of his texts. "Yesterday," he writes to the Bakunins on April 9, 1842, "I swallowed at one sitting Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibnitz. Leibnitz is still growling in my stomach. But without waiting I gobbled down

Kant, and now I am getting my teeth into Fichte, and as this man is somewhat dry, I am putting him aside to write to you."

He goes on to note his train of thought as he sits, book on knee, before the fire: he reads a line of his philosopher, decides that the fire needs wood, puts it on, reads another line, suddenly recalls a verse of Lermontov; he yawns, he paces over to the window, he hums a sonata, he watches the falling snow for ten minutes, he imagines himself a cabinet minister, then returns to his Fichte, and for five minutes stares smiling into the fire. "Oh, the joy of leisured, studious solitude!"

His examinations were in philosophy, Latin, and Greek. In writing his paper on Latin literature he was so carried away by his enthusiasm for Homer that he felt it necessary to append an apology to his examiners for his unconventional manner. He owed the German university a perdurable taste for the classics. His paper in philosophy had Pantheism for its subject and its target. The candidate's attitude was that of his teachers, who were all conservative, "right" Hegelians, and also largely that of the Russian academic authorities. In proclaiming the falsity of the doctrine of Pantheism, the young man upheld revealed religion, and took occasion to refer disapprovingly to the heretical Feuerbach. The existing discord between religion and science he conceived to be temporary: " . . . already many begin to believe that man must depend lovingly on God, and only in this relationship is it possible to find truth and freedom of thinking and happiness." He was expressing an intellectual conviction current in Stankevich's circle, where the terminology of faith had been freely used.

Among the papers of one of his friends was recently found a yellowed sheet on the margin of which is penciled: "Turgenev in his youth. Wanted to tear up." The paper bears in Turgenev's handwriting two prayers. The first, entitled "A Prayer in Time of Suffering," runs thus:

My gracious Lord and God, permit me to throw myself at Thy feet with a humble prayer. God grant me relief from my suffering, hold out to me the hand of help, hear my bitter groaning, look charitably upon my tears. My God, my God, do not remember the sins of my youth;

do not let me fall into despair, comfort my downcast and hopeless spirit. Lord, help me, spare me. Oh, my God! spare me, the poor, the ailing one; hear my weeping; Lord, let me draw my breath.

The second, apparently written after the danger was over and called "A Prayer in Time of Relief," reads as follows:

Gracious Lord, I thank Thee from the depths of my heart for the relief from my illness. Let the quiet joy of the appeased heart be my prayer before Thee. Lord, favor me with Thy continued aid; let it always dwell in my memory, so that I may not sink into obliviousness and indifference, but that I may always remember Thy grace. Lord, I thank Thee.

The paper is undated, but it was only in his early twenties that Turgenev had anything like the naïve faith which is expressed in these orisons. They may have been connected with the illness that attacked him in 1839, which could easily have given him a moment of panic. The fact that he troubled to write them down is quite as characteristic as the fact that he wanted to tear them up.

Because his religion had no roots in the emotional subsoil, he was later able to resign it without pain, yet even then a feeble religiosity was to linger on in his comfortless spirit. At the same time that he was turning Alexey Bakunin's thoughts to worldly matters, he was attributing the unhappiness of the young Bakunins to their lack of "deep religious feeling," and contemning them for making a half-hearted compromise with reality on the basis of "some measly little moral feeling or principle." At this stage he could argue for a personal God, but it is certain that he could not, like his mother, make an intimate and counselor of Christ, calling Him, as she did, "Immanuel Josefovich Kristofovich." And even if he had been in the habit of replying to his mother's letters, it is unlikely that he would have been interested in answering her question as to whether Christ had black hair, as she had dreamed when she was small and as the Italians painted Him, or whether He had golden hair, as she had recently read.

Ivan came through his examination in philosophy with flying colors. To the Bakunins he confessed that all he had done was to

rattle off a string of high-sounding phrases. He was sure real scholars must despise him and his philosophy. He would despise them if they did n't. The young man was obviously unsuited for an academic career. Privately, he was taken up with his newly begun play, "The Temptation of St. Anthony," the heroine of which was a certain Annunziata, a mistress of the devil. He sent a song from it to his friends, with directions to show it to Tatyana. "She will say at once if it is good or bad. I trust her." His lifelong habit of seeking criticism and deferring to the opinions of others began with his literary career.

The only thing that now stood between him and his degree, since he had passed both the oral and written tests, was the public defense of a dissertation. But he returned to Moscow when the examinations were over, with no further interest in pursuing the matter. Not even his mother's offer, two years later, of two thousand rubles if he would write a dissertation, was enough to revive it. Not long before a young man of very good family had received his master's degree and as Varvara Petrovna naïvely confessed to Ivan, she had dreamed of the same honor for him ever since. But in vain.

The academic door was now definitely closed. His mother's second choice for him was a bureaucratic career, upon which he proceeded to embark, entering the same year the Ministry of the Interior. The story goes that he came to his desk every morning to sit down to the business of reading George Sand's romances and composing verses. In fact, his first long narrative poem, "Parasha," is said to have been written here, to the scratching of quills and the patter of sand upon official documents. The summer, spent in the suburb of the capital, was equally placid: he promenaded, drank *Kreuzbrunnen,* and affected a green shade for his eyes, which were not very strong. After two years and several reprimands for tardiness, Ivan shook the dust of the office from his fashionable boots. He never forgot one instance of the carelessness which caused him to lose his post: because of a slip of his pen, a poor thief was given thirty lashes with the knout, instead of with the whip.

Varvara Petrovna was disgusted with her son's conduct. She had done everything she could to help him find his way about Moscow when he had returned from abroad, even providing him with a

list of friends and relatives, which included a character sketch of each, and instructions as to how to behave with them. One young woman she called his "old flame," of another she said, "You may flirt with her," and of a third, "Don't fail to call on her; if she says you're all right, every one else will say you are a wonder." Repeatedly she had enlarged upon the advantages of a convenient marriage and a career befitting his station. His defection drew down upon him a letter full of maternal pain and pleading, and he tasted the annoyance of an objective review of what he had done with himself since he returned to Russia.

By his mother's report it amounted to nothing more than idling, applauding a foreign prima donna, of whom more will be heard later, and traveling for his health. She was referring to the fact that her son had gone to Germany in August, 1842, and had remained there well into the winter. In Dresden there had been a reunion with Michel Bakunin and his brother Paul. Michel was especially happy to see him. He believed that their friendship was a sturdier thing than a mere youthful infatuation. "He is mine as I am his," he had written to Tatyana some months previously; and at this period he needed some one on whom he could rely.

Michel had just then decided to expatriate himself and devote his life to the cause of social revolution, with that childlike unconcern as to his daily bread which he never outgrew. He had come to Berlin in the first place on Herzen's money. And now Turgenev, though he did not share his friend's ideas, promised before leaving him to shoulder his considerable debts. Michel sent a number of letters after him, the last of which concluded thus:

We go two entirely different ways. Do not forget me. I shall never forget you. Never, never shall I cease really, concretely to love you and trust you. When you forget me I will think you dead. It's well we've seen each other again. We have come to know each other and I am certain that no matter where we meet, no matter under what circumstances, we shall shake each other's hands. I am certain that we shall live humanly, that's the main thing.

Ivan's mother was not concerned about his living "humanly." What she craved above all was that this twenty-six-year-old giddy-

head should settle down, if only to being a flâneur. She wrote to him:

If you were to tell me, Ivan, *"Maman,* my career in the civil service has begun well, I am satisfied, and people are satisfied with me," then without a moment's thought I give my orders and am taken to you. I make a home for you; you shall have your pocket-money. You come home, everything is ready: the table, the goodies, and a loving word. As usual, every one waits for a glance from you, to take Ivan Sergeyevich's orders. When my Ivan is with me in the winter, that's my fur coat, and I'm warm; in summer, I'm kept cool and comfortable. Without you, I suffocate and am miserable.

She does not insist on a bureaucratic career; she is content to see her son a gentleman of leisure:

You don't want to serve; God bless you, don't serve. Live quietly, where you please and how you please. You have an excuse which every one will approve of: *"Maman* is very ill; how can I leave her to strangers?" . . . I do not demand that you should serve. Why should you? You like to write, to promenade, to hunt, to travel. Who interferes with you? Spend the winter in Petersburg. Amuse yourself. Go to the theater. . . . In the springtime come back to the country. . . . The summer we shall spend traveling. In the autumn you can do your hunting. Live, and let us live near you. That's why I beg you: begin your dissertation. Work on it a year, two years. . . . Then you're a Master. Maybe you will even try for a doctorate. . . . You hold the happiness of the family in your hands, but your laziness and indifference is the cause of everybody's wretchedness. Sound your tuning-fork, put it to your ear, and give voice: we shall all chime in."

After Turgenev's retirement he continued to live in Petersburg, while his mother was dividing her time between Moscow and the country. Occasionally he would visit Spasskoye, chiefly for the sake of hunting, since home was becoming a more and more distasteful place. As she grew older, Varvara Petrovna was increasingly given to violent eccentricities and to rages which terrorized the household. She did not suffer any independent opinion or interest on the part of those about her. To come near her was to breathe a charged atmosphere. She would deprive her favorite serfs of their dogs—

nay, even of their children—when she was pleased to believe that these interfered with her. She tormented her butler and her gardener with a kind of idle sadism. She tyrannized over those she loved and loved those over whom she tyrannized. Her cruelty toward the dumb giant who was her porter afforded Turgenev material for his "Moomoo," which Carlyle called the most pathetic story in the world. It is noteworthy that the porter's devotion to Varvara Petrovna was no whit abated by her injustice.

On occasion Turgenev's mother could enact a little comedy such as might well have been imagined by Molière. It was Ivan's nameday (in 1845), and, in spite of his absence, the household was celebrating it with the traditional roast goose, sucking pig, and vodka. At nine o'clock in the evening the news ran through the house that the mistress was dying. The priest, hurriedly summoned, confessed the stricken woman, but before receiving extreme unction she indicated her desire to bless her adopted daughter and take leave of all the retainers and house serfs. After fifty men and women had filed by her bedside, she seemed to rally, demanded tea, and proceeded to mete out punishment to those who had failed to appear or who had come in tipsy. The same year Varvara Petrovna abolished Easter for her household. She happened to have suffered much annoyance at about this season, and rose on Easter Sunday in the worst of bad tempers. She ordered the church bells silenced and declared that since there was no Holy Week for her, there should be none for anybody near her. That she brooked no dictation even in her relations with her God, may be seen from the fact that on one occasion she forced her priest to confess her before an audience of her house serfs, in complacent defiance of church statutes.

All this can hardly have been after Ivan's taste. Indeed, he engaged in occasional mild clashes with his mother on the subject of serfdom, yet, being of an unheroic temper, he sulked in his tent more often than he gave battle. He was not high-minded enough to quarrel with his bread and butter, nor practical enough to earn it. The correspondence that passed between mother and son centered about money matters. The would-be philosopher was not averse to playing a part in the social life of the capital, and this mode of living was expensive. Besides, some of the money he received went to

satisfy Bakunin's creditors. He did not perform all that he had promised, as Michel discovered to his pain, and there was some prevarication before the remittance was made. Michel, although in desperate circumstances, excused him, since "his intention was truly good and loyal, and that 's all one person can demand of another." Ivan would receive sums from his mother with which to buy fashion magazines and bonnets for her, but before he found time to carry out her commissions, the money seemed to leak out of his pockets. When three hundred and fifty rubles which she had sent him for the purchase of a cape disappeared in this manner, his mother said briefly, "That 's stealing." It was rather the negligence of a young man engrossed with his own needs and desires, the same carelessness which caused him to mislay his university diploma and to lose the prescription against toothache sent him by Nicholas for the benefit of Mme. Turgenev's sexagenarian teeth.

Society in those years carried on in an atmosphere of trifling and imperturbable gaiety. The chief excitements were the introduction of the polonaise in 1844, and, at about the same time, the inauguration of a new card-game, called "Preference." The dance took the ball-rooms by storm, and hearts not exercised by the music were agreeably agitated by the game. In the theaters, the audience was stiffly seated in accordance with the official Table of Ranks, but the stage was dedicated to the lightest forms of entertainment. A few prescient spirits may have heard far off the rumblings of disaster, but the general, believing that their world rested securely on its foundations of bureaucracy and serfdom, faced life serenely enough.

The easy-going young man, being of good family and the heir to a large estate, had the entrée to some of the best drawing-rooms of the two capitals, and as a hopeful author he was beginning to move in literary circles as well. He would be seen on the promenade of an exclusive suburb of Petersburg, arm in arm with Count Sologub, who matched him in height, if not in wit. Of afternoons he would drop in at Mme. Panayev's, to kiss the hand of that famous beauty and gossip across the purring samovar, and perhaps eat the curdled milk that Dumas had praised. During the season he attended her Saturdays, where all the literary celebrities and their satellites came to drink tea and talk and pay court to the woman

who was to become Nekrasov's mistress. Turgenev would come here from some fashionable drawing-room, immaculate in his blue swallowtail with gold lion's-head buttons, and light checkered trousers, his white vest enlivened by a colored tie, and his hair worn à la Liszt.

Half a century later his hostess was to roll upon her malicious tongue various choice morsels about the young Turgenev. She made him out a good deal of a snob, avid of aristocratic connections, boasting of his successes in society, and no more reticent about his affairs of the heart; above all, inclined to treat truth rather cavalierly. There is no doubt that the budding poet won for himself the reputation of a liar. This would only bear out the contention of Plato and Oscar Wilde that poetry and lying are not unrelated arts. Indeed, admissions of mendacity recur in his appraisals of himself. He irritated people by his poses, his insincerity, and his intellectual frivolity. What Ivan abhorred above all, according to his friend Annenkov, was the humiliation of being like everybody else. To avoid this contumely he ascribed to himself all manner of eccentricities and vices of which he was incapable. He would nonplus his hearers, for example, by declaring that in the presence of a great work of art the hollow of his knees itched and his calves felt triangular. He would try on the rôles of a Don Juan or a Manfred—like Lord Darlington cherishing the little vanity of pretending to be worse than he was. But his masks deceived nobody.

Nor did they deceive himself. His affectations were the visible sign of a morbid self-consciousness and maladjustment. He was continually holding up the mirror to his own unintegrated nature. "There was something feminine," says Annenkov, "in this combination of resolution and caution, boldness and calculation, in this simultaneous readiness for initiative and repentance. . . ." And he was not the only one to find much of the woman in his friend. In those years Petersburg was full of blasé young men having Turgenev's irritating mannerisms and suffering from the same complaint. He differed from them only in the fact that he was able to analyze and objectify his ailment.

In the four long narrative poems which he wrote within the decade 1836–46 there is the recurrent figure of a young man without

desires or faith and without peace, unhappy in his play and ineffectual in his work. To this neurotic youth is opposed the normal, unselfconscious woman—an antithesis which will recur throughout Turgenev's novels like a theme in a sonata. The liberal opinions which will be sharpened in his later work are added here to the transmuted stuff of his personal experience. As for his lyrics,—there were about thirty published in those ten years,—aside from the stock themes of love and nature and the transience of things, treated in the manner of the period and without technical distinction, there is in them, too, the reiterated motif of the divided self. In after years Turgenev conceived a strong distaste for his verse; he contended that poems are like oysters: if they are not excellent, they are worthless. Yet as late as 1876 he spent a wakeful night composing a political poem, and always retained the ability to write a rhymed letter or make an impromtu quatrain for an after-dinner speech.

The prose which he printed during this decade consisted of a review of a book of travel in the Holy Land, written at the age of eighteen, two promising stories, a one-act play, and some critical essays. The literary craftsman he was to be is presaged not only in these pieces but also in the few letters of his which have come down to us from this period. There is an unusually deft touch, for example, about his sketch of the eleven ducks upon whose society he was thrown in the autumn of 1840, when he lay ill in Marienbad. He regaled his friends with a description of these fowls and with the appropriate names he had given them, such as Schelling, My Future, Nicholas I, Sky of Italy, Bakunin,—this last being bestowed upon a lean, tall, active duck who was constantly waddling with craned neck after flies.

As far as his literary preoccupation was concerned, Turgenev had no serious opposition from his family to face. Varvara Petrovna was delighted when on Easter, 1843, he brought her "Parasha" (he called his first book, an imitation of Pushkin's "Yevgeny Onyegin," after its heroine), and she kept the thin blue brochure on her drawing-room table. Indeed, Turgenev's mother was proud of him, and suggested that he take her maiden name, Lutovinov, as his pen-name, in order to immortalize it. "I do not know if it was difficult for you to give birth to a daughter," she

wrote him, "but, thank Heaven, you came through it beautifully. I am putting the amount of the Eleanora debt under the pillow of my first granddaughter. That 's over and above your allowance." She thus accorded the child of Ivan's brain the honor she was unwilling to bestow on the child of his loins. She was inclined to encourage the young author: "Do not stop writing. . . . No, no, our 'Parasha' is not without merits." A line therein, to the effect that cider is not served in the best houses, deprived his mother's guests of it permanently. His uncle's enthusiasm was even greater than his mother's. The man dubbed everything he loved "Parasha," from a new-born calf to Bibi. Yet Varvara Petrovna could hardly consider writing a serious occupation for a gentleman. She could see little difference between an author and a clerk, since, as she remarked in a moment of irritation, both were only soiling paper for money. Further, an author was liable to suffer various indignities. She watched the reviews jealously and said of criticism, *"Cela purge,"* but when Ivan proudly announced that his work had been noticed, the whimsical lady burst into tears at the thought that some priest's brat had criticized a Turgenev.

CHAPTER X

WESTWARD HO!

MONG those who frequented Mme. Panayev's drawing-room was one man to whom Turgenev gave himself whole-heartedly, and who responded by overlooking his friend's mannerisms and appreciating his gifts. This was Vissarion Belinsky, the man who established some literary reputations for his century and undid others permanently, although essentially he was a critic of life, rather than of letters. He had a maternal tenderness for fledgeling talents and he greeted the appearance of "Parasha," in 1843, with an enthusiastic review, pronouncing the author to be "the child of our time, carrying within his breast all its sorrows and problems."

Turgenev's further poetic efforts somewhat cooled Belinsky's interest, and eventually the critic declared that he had no authentic lyrical gift. Their friendship, however, suffered no whit. With the gusto of the doubter, Turgenev savored Belinsky's fervor and common sense, his intellectual honesty, his independent spirit, and that candid obscenity of language which spots his published correspondence with blank spaces. How could he but admire one who was so single-minded in his allegiances, and who was so well served by such knowledge as he had; for whatever Belinsky knew was not dead ballast, but a very wind in his sails. It was a matter of no account to the young Turgenev that his new friend had a different social background, coming as he did from the class of

educated commoners, the betwixt-and-betweens looked down upon by the gentry. As for the "fierce Vissarion," he loved the young man's lively mimicry, observing eye, and wicked sarcasm. The little man must, too, have enjoyed playing the mentor, and the frivolous giant took his friend's scoldings more meekly than he took his mother's.

Belinsky replaced Stankevich in Turgenev's affections. Like Stankevich, he was a man with a weak body and a strong devotion to the things of the spirit; an intense and disinterested soul, shy among people and ferocious in dealing with ideas. At the time when the two men began their intellectual traffic, the critic, once as ardent a Hegelian as any, was swearing not by the Absolute, but by humanity. He had repudiated with his customary vehemence the sanctified stand-pattism for which Hegel was supposed to act as sponsor. He had damned the Prussian monarchy extolled by the Master, and had declared his enthusiasm for the United States as the country having the "most rational government" in the world. The Belinsky with whom Turgenev had now to deal was a man storming at the insults that the existing order heaped on his intelligence and his sense of decency; a man pouring forth angry ribaldry on the institution of marriage, the double standard, religion, the self-righteous ethics of altruism, and indeed all conventions, traditions, rituals, and exalted shams.

Turgenev, though to a lesser degree than the other members of Stankevich's coterie, was beginning to turn his attention away from ethical self-culture to the duties of man as a citizen of this uncouth, inert, abused, pregnant Russia in which he lived. Belinsky helped him on his way. The young men who had been able to resolve their differences when these were in the realm of metaphysics, found themselves in two hostile camps when it came to less abstract matters, such as the immediate needs of their country. One camp went by the misleading name of Slavophil. The other, which included some of Stankevich's comrades and nearly all of Herzen's circle, under Belinsky's generalship, was known as Westernist. Here Turgenev naturally found himself.

For centuries the two orientations had striven for supremacy in Russia, but until now the conflict had not been raised to the level of elaborate theory. The Slavophils took over the ancient, simple,

nationalist faith, and made it flourish like a new evangel. The native folk-ways were as much in their minds and affections as is the Amerindian rhythm in the minds of certain American doctrinaires. But they went beyond the claims of civilized nationalism in holding that the heart of the world throbbed with the Russian pulse. In their eyes the proud civilization of Europe was nothing but a magnificent tomb, while their native wilds were, in the words of the historian, Kluchevsky, "the dirty village cradle in which restlessly tosses and helplessly cries the future of the world." They believed that a regenerated world order would be established with the triumph of the principles which were embodied in Russian history before Peter wilfully deflected it from its true course, and which had been kept alive in the soul of the common folk. To their thinking, Orthodoxy, autocracy, and the village commune were at once the historic endowment and the messianic virtue of the Russian people.

The Westernists were a humbler and more realistically minded lot. They saw Russia as the stepchild of history, but however neglected and immature, a born member of the European family of nations. The country could be saved only if it consented to be tutored by the West. Culturally, they were inspired by a humanist ideal, fostered in Europe by the Renaissance and the Age of Reason, both of which Russia had been denied. Politically, they ran the whole gamut of liberalism, with its faith in constitutional government and the initiative of the individual. They dismissed with amused scorn the bizarre Utopia which the Slavophils projected into a fictive past, where the lion of autocracy lies down beside the lamb of the plebs, in the pleasant shade of a theocratic church. They submitted that the ideas of their opponents meant, in practice, non-resistance to the evils of the day, and indeed, support of the existing order.

The men on both sides, with few exceptions, belonged, like Turgenev, to the gentry. But whereas the program of the Westernists expressed some of the aspirations of the third estate, that of the Slavophils embodied the wishes of a reactionary land-owning class. Among Belinsky's followers the rationalist mentality prevailed, among the Slavophils, the temper of the mystic; where the former desired to improve institutions, the latter held that social progress

could come only through individual perfection. Neither side, it must be kept in mind, had as yet climbed down from the peaks of theory onto the plain of performance. The nearest approach to it was the adoption by certain brave Slavophils of an archaic costume so historically correct that the natives failed to recognize it. What could any reform movement be in the reign of Nicholas I except a pious wish? The prevailing frame of mind under this régime was such that a man felt that he had achieved the utmost by taking thought. Men regarded ideas not as the blue-prints of action but as the very sum of architecture.

Moscow was the chief scene of the combat between the two factions. Turgenev, making his home in Petersburg, and coming only rarely to the old Russian capital, may not have been present at the verbal tourneys that went on there from dinner-time until nearly dawn, under the admiring eyes of fashionable ladies. But he was undoubtedly abreast of the matters that were being debated no longer in the salons only, but now even in the public prints. In one of his longer narrative poems, published in 1846, he caricatures a member of the Moscow gentry, giving him a fat nape, a costume like a coachman's kaftan, and an appetite for horse-radish and for invective against the nations of the West. Not for nothing had Turgenev won the nickname "gamin" from Belinsky, who, soon after the beginning of their acquaintance, wrote to a friend: "There is malice, gall, humor in him. He understands Moscow deeply, and mimicks it so that I get drunk with pleasure." Of course, the battle had but a secondary interest for Turgenev. Even his verse showed clearly that his concern was not with social theories but with the social scene. Yet there was no mistaking his sympathies. He accounted for his Westernism by the plunge he had taken into the German sea. There was also his affection for Belinsky, his own rationalist temper, and the sense of reality which was strongly asserting itself in him.

Turgenev spent the summer of his twenty-sixth year as Belinsky's neighbor in a suburb of Petersburg. They met almost daily. In the mellow light of the pine groves the tall, bulky figure might be seen marching beside the slight, stoop-shouldered one, or both would curl up on the soft moss, to finger the dry needles and talk and talk

and talk. Belinsky was thoroughly convinced of some things that Turgenev vaguely felt. In the end, Turgenev was convinced, too. Not only that Russia must throw off the chains of serfdom and turn her dull face westward. Not only that the Slavophils were a set of well-meaning blockheads and damnable retrogrades. Belinsky considered himself, after all, a critic of literature. Turgenev, even if he was only the author of certain slight lyrical and some solider narrative poems, was a literary aspirant. It is difficult to imagine that they failed to talk shop. (One must be a craftsman, of course. And yet one must ask of every work of art to what extent it shows awareness of contemporary problems and what it contributes to their solution.)

Listening to Belinsky's judgments and being made to participate in his perceptions, one was put in the way of investigating the life one wished to perfect. The sun seeped through the pungent dusk of the pines. Turgenev drank in the mild air, the excited voice, the gestures of the small, fine hands. The talk must sometimes have made him wonder if beauty were not, perhaps, a spiritual luxury in this day and generation. Before long he was to describe his age, in one of the critical essays which association with Belinsky tempted him to write, as a period in which people were unable to admire a fine picture of a beggar because they were distracted by the existence of beggars. He watched his friend's features grow a pale blur in the twilight, suffered for the weak body, adored the stern mind, felt himself poor, unworthy, unaccomplished, dreamed of turning over a new leaf, built, tore down, built up again, with a kind of happy wretchedness, a hopeful insufficiency. These were the days when he wanted each moment of his life to be "significant. A daring," as he admitted later, "and hardly sinless desire!"

The following three winters Turgenev was a regular visitor to the shabby rooms which the critic shared with the musty lady who had recently annexed him as a husband. The host would pace up and down, tapping his snuff-box with his frail hands, or sit huddled in his gray cotton-lined jacket, his blue gold-flecked eyes widening with animation as the talk progressed. These colloquia went on even when the consumptive Belinsky was ill, and Turgenev, much to his opponent's displeasure, was usually the first to suggest breaking off

the discussion for some more sustaining occupation. "We have n't yet settled the question of the existence of God," Belinsky once reproached him, "and you want to eat!"

Turgenev's youthful capacity for exalting some individual who won him emotionally and intellectually is evidenced in his relations with Belinsky as it had been in his friendship with Stankevich. Many years after the critic's death in 1848 Turgenev was still speaking of him with unlimited admiration, worshiping his memory as that of "a saint." His affection found a practical expression when he gave a pension to the dead man's widow. In the character of Pokorsky, described in "Rudin," the novelist blends the essences of his Stankevich and his Belinsky. "It seems," we are told in the novel, "as though a man had become a perfect wild beast, but no sooner do you mention Pokorsky's name in his presence than all the remnants of nobility begin to stir within him, just as though you had uncorked a forgotten bottle of perfume in a dark dirty room. . . ."

Belinsky's circle included several exceptional men. But the group as a whole had the vices as well as the virtues of any artistic coterie. Like Belinsky, Turgenev often resented its tyranny. He was to write in one of his early short stories:

> A circle substitutes arguments for conversation, trains men for fruitless jabbering, diverts you from solitary, beneficent work, infects you with the literary itch. It robs you, in short, of your freshness and virginal firmness of soul. A circle—why, it is staleness and boredom under the name of brotherhood and friendship, a concatenation of misunderstandings and cavilings under the pretext of frankness and sympathy.

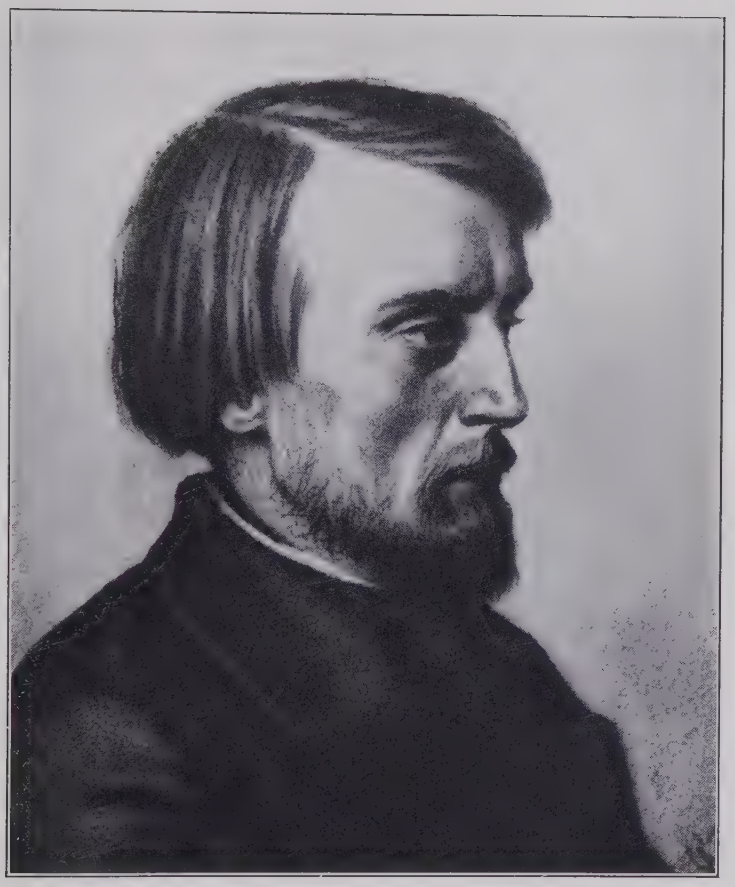
Hovering around the group were a number of hangers-on with conveniently full pockets who paid liberally for the sensation of entertaining the great. And the great were quite willing to be entertained. A satirist of the period, aiming at the circle, declared: "Petty foibles, mean impulses, low feelings, are just as common to those who write good books as to those who read them." Cards and wine were as much a matter of course at the gatherings as was good talk. Turgenev, whose mother was keeping a tight hold on

the purse-strings, was hard put to it to pay his gambling debts. He amused himself, like the others, with skits and sometimes with quite obscene inspirations coming from the pen of the notorious Longinov, and he was also a good hand at writing epigrams as cruel as they were clever. The object of one of these shafts was a pale, awkward, self-conscious youth, an admirer of Mme. Panayev's whom Belinsky had only just dragged into the lime-light and who, some thirty years later, was to become the author of "The Brothers Karamazov."

The beginning of 1847 found Turgenev winding up his affairs preparatory to a trip abroad. By the middle of February he was in Germany. The six years that had passed since he left western Europe after his first extended stay there had dulled his sensibility and enthusiasm, fed his experience and shaped his opinions. The cessation of his formal instruction had initiated a new phase of his education. His commerce was now more with people than with ideas, and he was laying in a varied and substantial stock of observations on life and character. What he jeered at aloud, he was quietly studying. He took in the company in the drawing-room as he took in the landscape on his hunting-trips, with the greedy interest of a child in a toy-shop.

Besides, his contact with Belinsky had encouraged whatever nonconformist stuff was in him, and so, like many others among his contemporaries all over Europe, he was turning away from "right" Hegelianism, toward the radical, materialistic outlook of Feuerbach and the other "left" Hegelians. And yet he was always to hold to the fundamentally conservative position of his German professors, who conceived the human race to be pushing up through the darkness as slowly and unconsciously as a turnip, and considered revolutions no better than sterile tempests. The subsequent changes in his mental attitude could not erase, though they obscured, the idealistic notions that had taken hold of him during his formative years: a reliance on consciousness, a profound appreciation of such generous, if general, values as Art, Freedom, Humanity.

Turgenev was later to declare that his escape from Russia was a strategic retreat, executed so that he might the more freely attack serfdom, and carry out his Hannibal's oath against that evil. He



Vissarion Belinsky

left the country because what he saw there confused, repelled, and outraged him. He could not, he said, breathe the air of oppression. There is some truth in these assertions, but he failed to mention perhaps the most cogent reason for his departure. One is led to believe that he went to Berlin, as he was to go so many places during his remaining thirty-six years, to be near Pauline Garcia Viardot.

CHAPTER XI

NOVEMBER FIRST, EIGHTEEN-FORTY-THREE

VAN was bumping his three-year-old shins against the clumsy heirlooms at Spasskoye when the youngest Garcia's first cry broke against the walls of her parents' Parisian flat. Pauline was a born cosmopolite: she had Spanish progenitors, an Italian godfather, a Russian godmother, and in good time a French husband. Further, she was a born musician, like her sister, la Malibran, inheriting the gifts of both parents and developing them to the point of genius. Her mother, who was a prima donna, came of good family. But her father was born in the gipsy quarter of Seville and could never tell Pauline who her paternal grandfather was. The handsome Don Manoel was characterized by his daughter as an ebullient mixture of passion, folly, kindness and indomitable cockiness. He could do everything, from composing a sauce to composing an opera. The man was also a singer and eventually he became an impresario, taking his company, which included his wife and his two older children, from one capital to another.

When Pauline was four years old she found herself in New York, where for nearly forty weeks running, generally on Tuesday and Saturday nights, her celebrated family deserted her to divert the fashionables with the first Italian opera ever produced in that city. The initial performance took place on the night of November 29, at the Park Theater—on the site of what is now 21–25 Park Row,

opposite the old General Post Office—the finer of the two theaters in New York at the time. The opera was Rossini's "Barber of Seville"; Don Manoel had created the rôle of Almaviva in the original production in Rome nine years previously. In the audience were such gentlemen as Fenimore Cooper and Napoleon's brother Joseph, one-time King of Spain. "The New York Evening Post" reported the next day that "an assemblage so fashionable, so numerous, and so elegantly dressed, was probably never witnessed in our theater." This assemblage was "surprised, delighted, enchanted. . . . The repeated plaudits with which the theater rang were unequivocal, unaffected bursts of rapture." The opening night netted the company three thousand dollars. Box-seats were two dollars, orchestra chairs one dollar, and the gallery seats sold for a quarter.

With the proceeds in his pocket, Don Manoel, in September, 1826, extended his tour to Mexico City, where he remained two years. It was a real undertaking at the time, but the Garcias were a hardy lot; the doctor who attended them in New York observed that they had "good constitutions and took little physic." Little Pauline, who made one of the party as a matter of course, was already speaking four of the languages in which she was to sing. Their adventure in the wild south ended disastrously. As they made their way to Vera Cruz on the return journey they were overtaken by bandits, who disembarrassed Don Manoel of his fortune, which he carried with him in the attractive form of gold and silver coin. Pauline always remembered how her teeth chattered as she lay in her mother's arms, wrapped in the frightened woman's Scotch plaid, while the bandits were looting the caravan. One of them made off with Pauline's own little plaid, a possession which she thought to be exactly like her mother's and of which she was very proud. What she resented was not so much the loss of her cape as the indignity of seeing it shrink to the proportions of a child's cloak across the huge shoulders of the Mexican.

When they again settled in Paris, in 1829, Pauline's musical education was taken in hand by various members of her family, assisted by professional teachers. As a matter of fact, she could not remember the time when she had been ignorant of music. It was an element of the air she breathed. Franz Liszt, under whom she

studied composition, was very proud of her. He came to rank her with Pasta, Schroeder-Devrient, and Rachel, and indeed assigned her a unique place in that dazzling sorority for her diversified gifts, her intellect, and her character. "The ant," as her family nicknamed her for her patient industry, had had a sound education and profited by it. Like Turgenev, she was devoted to the classics. She brought up her own daughters on Homer, so that Louise, the eldest, knew by heart every episode of the Iliad and the Odyssey, and Claudie called her rocking-horse "Ballios" for Achilles's steed.

Pauline was sixteen years old when her voice was placed; it combined the registers of soprano and contralto; and it was then that she made her début on the concert stage in Brussels, although even previously she had assisted la Malibran at her recitals. Two years later, in London, she began her operatic career, as Desdemona. Louis Viardot, the director of the Italian opera in Paris, immediately engaged her for the next season.

When Pauline sang in the French capital for the first time at l'Odéon, la Malibran had been dead for three years, and Musset, who had adored the elder sister's voice, and whose stanzas had mourned her passing, was of course in the younger sister's audience. The first notes gave him the uncanny sensation that la Malibran had returned from the grave to sing for him. He recognized the same timbre, the same combination of roughness and sweetness, the same after-taste as of the tang of a wild fruit. His admiration of the artist soon warmed to a more personal emotion, which was also to be aroused in him by her mother. He began paying court to both, at the same time bestowing his attentions upon Mlle. Rachel, who had made her début in the world and upon the stage during the same period.

Whether due to Rachel's superior charm or to George Sand's maternal interference, or to the fact that Mlle. Garcia had rejected him, Musset drifted away from *"l'ingrate Pauline,"* as he called her thereafter, and a year later, in 1840, Pauline was married to Louis Viardot. Saint-Saens speaks of him as one of the handsomest men of his time, but he was also more than twice as old as his bride.

The match was largely engineered by George Sand. The pair visited her at Nohant, her estate, the year after the wedding. There

the two women promenaded and played billiards while the men hunted, and in the evening young Mme. Viardot was at the piano with Chopin. Pauline was in a measure the model for Sand's heroine, Consuelo, in the novel of that name, and the flattered—and flattering—original wrote to the novelist that to have assisted her in creating "this remarkable figure" was undoubtedly "the best" she had ever done in the world. In spite of frequent absences from France, on tour, Pauline continued to keep in touch with Mme. Sand, who remained a lifelong friend of the family.

Louis Viardot gave up his post to become Pauline's impresario. He accepted in his usual responsible fashion the ungrateful rôle of the husband of a celebrity, and soon after the wedding Pauline resumed her triumphant career. She was by no means beautiful; she had no illusions on that score. She had, she believed, only a second-rate voice, yet she claimed, paradoxically enough, that this was the secret of her success: had her natural endowments been richer, she would have been less of a conscious craftsman and therefore less of an artist. As it was, she owed her achievements to a virtuosity depending on her infinite capacity for taking pains. She found her audiences in all the European capitals, and her reputation as a dramatic singer rolled up like a huge snowball.

During the season 1842–43 she was singing in Paris at the Théâtre Italien, where Heinrich Heine often came to hear her. About Easter of that year she went to Vienna to sing for the Emperor of Austria on his birthday. In the summer she was heard by the King of Prussia, at a concert arranged in Berlin by Meyerbeer. Of her three distinguished auditors, only the prince of poets voiced his opinion of her. As usual he seems to grin at his own emotion. He wrote of her in 1844:

She is no nightingale, who has only the talent of her kind and who sobs and trills exquisitely in spring fashion; nor is she a rose, for she is ugly, but of a noble, I might almost say a beautiful type of ugliness, such as sometimes fascinated and inspired the great painter of lions, Delacroix! Indeed, la Garcia suggests less the civilized beauty and tame grace of our European home land than the terrible splendor of an exotic wilderness, and during some moments of her passionate performance, especially when she opens wide her large mouth with its dazzling

white teeth, and smiles with such savage sweetness and bewitching ferocity, one feels as though the monstrous growths and animals of Hindustan or Africa were arising before one; as if giant palms, enlaced by thousand-blossomed lianas, were shooting up; and one would not be surprised if suddenly a leopard or a giraffe or even a herd of young elephants were to tramp across the stage.

Heine made these notes in a mood of reminiscence and regret, for during the season of 1843–44 Mme. Viardot was a thousand miles away from Paris. She had accepted an engagement to sing in Petersburg, at a salary of fifty thousand francs, plus the proceeds of one special performance. That season saw the return of Italian opera to Petersburg for the first time since the half-witted martinet Paul I abolished it in a fit of parsimoniousness in 1798. The capital was all agog. The opera opened in October at the Bolshoi Theater with the very piece which had initiated the New York performances, "The Barber of Seville." The tall, bald German conductor lent an added note of color to the evening by waving his baton in a yellow-gloved hand. Mme. Viardot sang the rôle of Rosine for a packed house which she swept out of skepticism into a frenzied ecstasy.

That evening, marking another triumph for her, also assured the success of the new musical venture. Night after night, until Lent closed the season, the opera-house was filled to capacity, impecunious music-lovers overflowing into the aisles, balancing themselves on every possible and impossible ridge, and even perching, at the risk of their lives, in the space between roof and ceiling around the aperture from which the central chandelier was suspended. It is on record that two students crossed the Neva before the ice was tested and the gangways laid, simply to hear the incomparable Viardot. The opera was the chief topic in all the drawing-rooms, so that finally the outwearied hostesses agreed to rule it out of the conversation entirely. There was no end of gossip, not all of it kindly, about the prima donna. It was repeated at Mme. Panayev's as elsewhere, that the great artiste had Jewish blood in her veins. Else why should she be so grasping? Perhaps not without reason, the reputation for being greedy clung to her. She was certainly the sort of woman who insisted on receiving her due. Turgenev took up the cudgels in her defense.

He must have been in the first-night audience which burst into a fury of applause on the last note of Rosine's aria, *"Una voce poco fà."* A few weeks later, on the morning of November 1, 1843, he met the singer for the first time. For years he celebrated the return of this "sacred" day. He went to her apartment—it was in a corner house on the Nevsky opposite the Alexandrinsky Theater—in the company of a notoriously ridiculous little major. Turgenev writes to Mme. Viardot on the ninth anniversary of this meeting that he always thinks with pleasure of the stupid fellow because chance had associated him with that morning.

The woman who stood before him that November day, seen by the sober eye was a thin, flat-chested, slightly stooped person, with a wide, full-lipped mouth, prominent features, and huge, hot, black Spanish eyes. A pencil drawing of the period which was recently found among Turgenev's papers confirms the universal testimony to the homeliness of the woman, but conveys no hint of the fascination of the artiste. Before her engagement to Viardot, a Belgian painter, on being introduced to her, said to her future husband, "She is atrociously homely, but should I see her again I would fall madly in love with her." Which he did. It must have gone not very differently with Turgenev.

The young man, who was introduced to her as a good hunter, an interesting talker, and a poor poet, found himself not the most distinguished among a group of the prima donna's admirers. It gradually narrowed itself down to what Turgenev called her "Old Guard," which included a general, a count, and the son of the director of the Imperial Theaters. The latter, according to legend, had a private greenroom built just off the stage for Mme. Viardot's comfort. After the performance the prima donna would rest there on a bearskin shot by one of the faithful. Four gentlemen were admitted to enjoy seats of honor on the four gilded paws, each of which had its number and its regular occupant, who had to tell a story during the intermission. Mme. Viardot, in a white peignoir, was throned in the center. Rumor had it that on one of those golden corners—Number 3, to be exact—sat the rapt Turgenev.

Mme. Panayev expatiates in her memoirs on how he dinned his passion into everybody's ears. He annoyed her especially by his

uninvited invasion of her box, where his huge frame would interfere with every one's view and his ear-splitting applause arouse the indignation of the neighboring boxes. On one occasion, she writes, he broke up a game of "Preference" in which Belinsky was taking a hand, to relate how his divinity had with her own fingers rubbed his aching temples with Eau de Cologne. Since his mother kept him short of money, he had sometimes to appear in a cheap seat. It is reported that ashamed of being seen there, he explained to his fashionable acquaintances that he was looking after claqueurs he had hired.

The few letters from Turgenev to Mme. Viardot for the period up to his departure from Russia, do not, however, fit in with Mme. Panayev's presentation of the affair. If the interest they show is too deep for a cool friendship, it is not importunate enough for passion. The singer was in Russia for three successive seasons. It was after the first winter that Turgenev was writing her: "We poor famished creatures feed upon our memories," the disarming plural referring to the Old Guard. The subsequent summer he made a short trip abroad to have his eyes treated, and visited the Viardots at their estate, the Château de Courtavenel, making the acquaintance of the whole family.

Curiously enough, even from the beginning, Turgenev's regard for his lady embraced her relatives as well. He is in correspondence with her mother; he receives letters written jointly by Pauline and Louis Viardot; he sends their small daughter Louise "a fat kiss." It is of a piece with the familial serenity of this relationship that he should fill his letters with such impersonal matter as the theatrical gossip of Petersburg and intelligence concerning his griffon, answering to the name of Paradise Lost, and his English bay mare, Queen Victoria. Nevertheless, he sometimes lets his voice drop to a more intimate tone, as when he begs Pauline to care for her health, advises her about her reading, speaks of following her engagements in local papers, and writes in March, 1844: "I wanted to look into our dear little rooms, but some one is living in them now." Though these words seem to smile to themselves secretly, the context allows of no compromising interpretation of this phrase. All the meager evidence points to a platonic affection.

It was just before she left Russia that an acquaintance of Turge-

PAULINE VIARDOT IN 1843

From an engraving by Achille Martinet after the painting by Ary Scheffer

nev's, a certain prince, came to pay his respects to the departing prima donna. Standing in the twilit foyer as he waited to be announced, he noticed a tall, heavily built man panting over a trunk which would not close for him. At first the prince ignored him, thinking him a servant. But the man's obvious incompetence attracted the visitor's attention and he and Turgenev recognized each other with mutual embarrassment. Talking rapidly, Turgenev explained that M. Viardot had left for Paris in advance and that Mme. Viardot was about to follow him. Half a century later the prince, recalling the incident, spoke of the curious fear for Turgenev that had seized him at that moment.

Mme. Viardot did not return to Petersburg for a fourth season, and on November 20, 1846, she being then in Berlin, Turgenev wrote to her that the coming year would bring her one more auditor at the Opern-Haus there. "What a wonderful thing it is," he writes in a subsequent letter, "the mere possibility of telling you 'au revoir'!"

CHAPTER XII

THE DARK LADY

THREE months later Turgenev was applauding Pauline Viardot in "Les Huguenots" at the opera-house of the Prussian capital. Berlin revisited after half a dozen years appeared to him a changed city. Bettina no longer dyed her hair, Max Stirner looked sleek and tame and sad, Schelling was silent, and Werder, unserenaded, expounded Hegelian logic, as Turgenev wrote home, to an audience of three students, of whom only one was German, and he a Pomeranian. Alone the influence of Feuerbach's sobering iconoclasm sustained itself, Turgenev believed, amidst the general indifference to speculative thought. He sensed the end of what he called "the literary, theorizing, philosophic, fantastic epoch of German life." His acute perception of this change he owed to the fact that a parallel process was going on within him. Another decade will pass and he will be unable to understand his own notes on the lectures he had attended in Berlin. Indeed, here was a harder, more realistic mind, now seldom dallying in the metaphysical playground, rather fitting itself to the harness of literature.

He followed Mme. Viardot to Dresden in the spring of the year. With him went the consumptive Belinsky, a veritable babe in the woods away from home, who threw himself upon his friend as upon a nurse. After twelve days there, which cannot have offered the young man many glimpses of his idol, although he stopped at the

same hotel as the Viardots, Turgenev accompanied the invalid Belinsky to Salzbrunn, where the latter was sent to take the cure. There the two were joined by the plump and practical Annenkov, who was to become Turgenev's lifelong friend, factotum, and guide in the conduct of his literary affairs, and from late May to the close of June the air of the quiet Silesian watering-place was stirred by many discussions in a strange tongue. It was here that the ailing critic wrote Gogol the letter of furious invective against the infamy of serfdom, the plague of bureaucracy, and the abomination of the official church, which, spread in innumerable handwritten copies, became the manifesto of Russian liberalism. It was the letter which was instrumental in sending Dostoyevsky to Siberia, and which Turgenev accepted as his credo.

It was nearly midsummer when, after a flying visit to London, Turgenev came to port at last at the Château de Courtavenel. The estate of the Viardots lay about forty miles east of Paris, in the midst of the meadows and forests of La Brie. The castle was a moss-grown structure, dating back to Henri IV, with all the feudal circumstance of turrets, drawbridge, and moat, and a rear view which reminded the châtelaine of a jolly grocer. Summering here, the owners opened its gates to their relatives and friends. The household adopted the young Russian, and he in turn responded with an all-inclusive gesture of affection. The castle offered him the spaciousness, if not the abundance, to which Spasskoye had accustomed him, without its offending brutalities, and here too there were game in the brush and fish in the streams. In the drawing-room, moreover, there was frequently music, which may have been to Turgenev, as it was to Orsino, "the food of love," but which also satisfied an impersonal and permanent appetite. And above all, whether or not the hostess was there in the flesh, Courtavenel provided the exquisite reassurance of her presence.

The château was, however, only a summer home, and when the singer left for her autumn and winter tour in Germany, Turgenev, like her mother, moved to Paris. This was the first of several separations during the three years he spent in France. The months of her absence were filled for him with a kind of contented loneliness, and it would seem as though they mortised this unshaken friendship.

It was impossible for him to follow her in her peregrinations, because of lack of funds. He had left Russia with a very modest sum in his pockets, and his tailor's bill of two hundred rubles still unpaid, not to mention other debts. Three lean years, financially speaking, were ahead of him. Money remittances from home were few and far between, and he was virtually thrown upon his own resources. His mother declared daily, "I must send Vanichka some money," and every day omitted to do so.

The young man found a room for himself near the Palais Royal and settled down to plain living and earnest writing. When the wolf howled at the door he threw his ink-bottle at it. He spent long mornings at his desk, over many prose sketches and not a few plays. He gave hours to the study of Pauline's native tongue. His promiscuous reading included Voltaire, the Koran, and Lady Montague. He discovered compatriots, among them old friends like Bakunin and new ones like the émigré Herzen, the most brilliant publicist of his time, and, to use his own phrase, a tireless suitor of the Penelope, revolution. He saw much of Annenkov, a born satellite blessed with admirable taste. Turgenev described this friend to Mme. Viardot as "an excellent fellow, whose mind is as fine as his body is fat." Much of his time the incipient novelist spent getting the sort of education a young man could pick up in the streets, the cafés, the galleries, the concert halls, the theaters of the Paris of the forties.

Turgenev's day usually included a visit or two to *"Maman,"* as he called Mme. Garcia in his letters to her daughter. He was perhaps more filial to this old lady, who mended his shirts for him, than to his own mother. The two would have many a long tête-à-tête over sheets hastily scribbled in ill-spelled Spanish by the vagrant prima donna. It was his privilege to read the letters aloud. He has himself described those regalements: "After having devoured it [the letter] en bloc, we start to pick at it here and there. Appetite grows with eating, and we begin to read it once more." And again: "Ah, Madame what a good thing long letters are! It is as though, in summer, one entered a long alley, green and fresh. Ah, one says to oneself, it is pleasant here, and one walks slowly, listening to the twitter of the birds. You chirp far better than they, Madame.

Pray, go on. You will never find more attentive or greedier readers."

Of his correspondence with Mme. Viardot we have but a portion, which includes only the man's letters, and not all of these. He kept her informed of what he did with his time, filled pages with opinions on life and literature, with accounts of his reading and his writing, with comments on music and musicians, and with domestic details. He would keep a letter on his table for days, until, when he finally mailed it, it assumed the shape of a diary, in which he even recounted his dreams.

He was a critical admirer. He advised Mme. Viardot, he cautioned her, unweariedly he followed her triumphs in the papers; and there is ground for believing that she deferred to his opinions on music and acting even when she disagreed with them. When, during one of his later solitary stays at Courtavenel, an aunt of Pauline's, leaving the château, gave the penniless Turgenev thirty francs, he used them on a trip to Paris, simply to read in eight papers the English press notices of the singer's London successes. When she was preparing for her début in "Le Prophète," he wrote: "In Heaven's name, let me know in advance the day of the first performance. . . . That night somebody at Courtavenel will not go to bed before midnight." He kept his promise and wrote to her as the clock struck the hours which, he presumed, called her before the curtain. The same somebody applauded her in effigy and threw flowers to her portrait, which, he said, "unfortunately does not resemble you."

In general, his tone is one of respectable solicitude and friendly regard. The letters are marked by a cheerful equanimity and an effortless humor. Yet the springs of a more troubling emotion sometimes agitate their calm surface. A phrase here and there suggests, however feebly, that the quintessence of all these gossipy bulletins is Heine's *"Madame, ich liebe Sie."* "Dear, precious creature!" he writes on one occasion, "I am thinking of you every minute, and of joy, and of the future. Write me even on little scraps of paper in your letters . . . you know what." And again: "I cannot tell you how many times I thought of you in the course of the day. On my way back [from a country festival] I shouted

your name with such force and stretched out my arms to you with such passion. . . . You must have heard and seen it." After declaring that his wishes for her are strong enough to uproot oaks, he adds: *"Liebe, Teuere: Gott sei mit dir und segne dich!"* This employment of the intimate second person singular is unique in the correspondence, but not so the use of German, the language of the warmest passages of his letters to her. It was a tongue which Mme. Viardot's husband admitted, on a page of his "Souvenirs de Chasse," to having no knowledge of.

A letter dated Paris, January 4, 1848, written while the singer was in Berlin, speaks even more plainly of the degree of their intimacy:

I know where you are living; is n't it near the Brandenburger Thor? You will excuse me if I allow myself to speak about certain details of your apartment: Why are certain regions of it which are only referred to by their English name—perhaps because the English are most discreet in their vocabulary—why are these regions subjected to the inclemency of the elements and the rigors of cold? Please be careful, and do something about it. It 's more serious than it appears at first blush, especially at this season of grippe and rheumatism. You will probably laugh at me and the subjects which I mention in my letter. I see from here how you smile, raising your right shoulder and inclining your head in the same direction (that 's your customary gesture and I advise you not to give it up, because it is very beautiful, especially when it is accompanied by a peculiar little grimace).

Through pages of advice, gossip, discourse, and invective, Mme. Viardot's correspondent scattered, as had been his mother's habit, slight precise sketches of men and beasts. The craftsman peers out in such passages as this:

I have made the acquaintance of two dogs: one, communicative, gay, flighty, of little or no education, witty, fond of raillery, somewhat of a rogue, on the best terms with every one and, to tell the truth, without true dignity; the other: gentle, wistful, lazy, gluttonous, steeped in Lamartine, insinuating and disdainful at the same time. We frequent the same café. The first belongs, if a dog can be said to belong, to a little army surgeon, very lean and very crabbed; the other has for a mistress the cashier, a little old woman who has worn out her teeth chewing on kind thoughts.

About political events, Turgenev had little to say, in spite of the fact that he was a witness to the revolution of 1848. At six o'clock in the morning of February 26 he was lying abed in a Brussels hotel when he was roused from sleep by a voice shouting: "France has become a republic!" He hurried back to Paris, reaching the city as soon as torn-up tracks and a wrecked train allowed him, and arrived in time to see the cockaded workingmen taking the barricades apart. Rushing from Brussels to Paris, a day or two earlier was Bakunin, who went to participate where his friend went to watch.

Turgenev loitered on the streets for hours. He listened to a soap-box orator, whom, as he wrote to Pauline, he found very violent and very flat and whom the crowd warmly applauded. He heard Rachel, draped in the tricolor, sing the Marseillaise. He watched a workers' demonstration, noticing the peddlers of cigars and licorice-water who darted through the crowd, "avid, satisfied and indifferent. They looked like fishermen bringing in a heavily laden net." Things seemed to happen irrationally. His comment to Pauline Viardot on a day spent in the streets was: "What is history, then? Providence, chance, irony, or fatality?" He ran with a crowd which was driven with bayonets from the Place de la Concorde, and ten days later he was under the fire of the insurgents. A national guardsman from the provinces mistook him for a Russian agent fomenting trouble, but not all his compatriots in Paris, concerned as they were with the outcome of the revolution, could make him other than an artist who was also a liberal. They had called him "Republican" as a boy. The man was, unwillingly, a mugwump. He looked on at the drab pageant in a frame of mind which began with curiosity and ended with a sad shrug of the shoulders.

Turgenev was still in Paris in the sultry June days when the red flag was wagging from the barricades, as he phrases it, like a sharp, ominous tongue. He was to use one of these barricades as the place for the futile death of his Hamletic hero, Rudin. The June days themselves he described in his Reminiscences, where he tells the heroic story of an old workman who was sent by his comrades into the enemy's camp simply to tell a father, a bourgeois father, of his child's safety. Yet the tale does not celebrate the cause of the

workers, but is, characteristically enough, merely a sober psychological study.

By this time the meteoric Bakunin was no longer in Paris. He had gone to the duchy of Posen on money borrowed from the French provisional government (his friend Herzen said that he accepted money from strangers as children take it from their parents), in order to rouse the Poles and the Russians against Emperor Nicholas I. Meanwhile Herzen had arrived from Italy and begun keeping open house for shipwrecked revolutionists from the four corners of the continent. Turgenev was by no means one of these, but he found the house a congenial place for a lonely Russian.

He soon shook the blood-stained dust of Paris from his feet and went home, as it were, to Courtavenel. In October Mme. Viardot was receiving letters from him dated Hyères, Toulon, and Lyons. In one of them he confesses that he tried to write verse for her but failed: "I could only look, dream, remember." In another letter he allowed himself a purple patch evoking for her the Mediterranean colors she knew so well. On the whole, he found France "decidedly unbeautiful." He seemed to dislike the country as heartily as he loved the woman who was to keep him there so many years of his life. Had n't Belinsky, the previous year, called France a land of shame, and its face a cuspidor for all the nations of Europe? A fortnight before returning to the capital Turgenev wrote to say that on the fifth of November she might expect one more guest at table in her little Chinese salon. "I demand," he added, "a charlotte russe that day."

That winter Turgenev was a daily visitor at the Herzens. It was not a cheerful house. They could not get over the failure of the revolution. It was Turgenev's rôle to clown it among the mourners. There was another Russian family, the Tuchkovs, in the house, and these helped to form a tiny Russian colony. Turgenev would amuse the ladies with his old tricks of foolery and mimicry. He perched on the window-sill and crowed like a cock, he draped himself in Mme. Herzen's black velvet cape and played the madman till the ladies shivered and begged him to stop. He had chess-bouts with M. Tuchkov and brought gardenia scent to his daughter. When other pleasures failed he would avail himself of any unoccupied couch,

PAULINE VIARDOT IN 1844

From a sketch made during her Petersburg engagement; found among Turgenev's papers

with a genius for curling up his big body in the smallest possible space. Although he gave Mlle. Tuchkov a note-book with an inscription to the effect that he would never forget her, and had heart-to-heart talks with Mme. Herzen, both ladies found him dumb on the subject of Mme. Viardot. "All that relates to him, that is, to Viardot," Mme. Herzen wrote to a friend, "is under the veil of darkness." The girl agreed with the matron that to take Mme. Viardot's name in vain was blasphemy to him.

Then came another, his last summer at Courtavenel. Part of it he spent there in the absence of his hosts. After Mme. Viardot left, he wrote to her that he had seen her in his dream, bending over the ship's screw and looking at the white foam on the green water. At the château he had his old room, with its friendly willow-green wall-paper. He lived, as he told the prima donna, as in an enchanted castle, where the table spread itself and the linen laundered itself. For a time he was alone with the cook Véronique, and threw out the suggestion that he might marry her to reward her for her services, inasmuch as any other mode of payment was chimera to him. He amused himself by hanging literary allusions on the trees about the place, naming a certain chestnut Hermann and seeking for a Dorothea, and the like. He gossiped to his absent hostess "like a magpie who has remained an old maid." With a woman's sense of detail he gave accounts of the rat who was caught in the kitchen, the little white cock that had an aversion to him, the gnats that turned his body into one wound like that of Hippolytus, and the hare that was drowned in the moat and whom he suspected of suicide.

Turgenev's position at the château was somewhat ambiguous. He stayed on in the ill-defined capacity of one who, without being a pensioner, was not exactly a guest. Neither his allowance from his mother nor his scanty literary earnings so much as permitted him to tip the servants. By winter he was "in dire poverty" and wrote home that he needed three hundred rubles to save himself "from starvation." Whether because of friendly interest or a nagging sense of obligation, he made himself useful, draining the moat, teaching the little Louise German, arranging the library. Besides, there was the husband. Judging by Turgenev's letters, the relations between Viardot and himself were cordial. They shared the

pleasures of the chase, and the younger man did not hesitate to borrow from the older. Before his departure for Russia Turgenev wrote to Viardot, on June 24, 1850:

I do not want to leave France, my dear good friend, without having told you how much I love and esteem you, and how I regret the necessity of this separation. I shall not feel truly happy until at your side, rifle in hand, I can once more beat the brush of dear la Brie. One's country has its rights, no doubt, but the true Fatherland—is it not where one has found the most affection, where the heart and the spirit feel at ease? There is no place on earth which I love as much as Courtavenel.

But there were moments when the thought of his "dear good friend" pricked him. "What is the matter with Viardot?" runs a German phrase in a letter of July 23, 1849. "Is he perhaps annoyed at my living here [Courtavenel]?" And again recurs the note of Turgenev's uneasiness: "I feel as though I had the look of a braggart, but at bottom I am just a little boy. I have my tail between my legs and I am seated very shabbily and miserably on my haunches, like a dog who feels that he is being made fun of and who looks vaguely out of the corner of his eyes, blinking as if dazzled by the sun. . . ."

CHAPTER XIII

"A SPORTSMAN'S SKETCHES"

NY politically minded young man would have found the France in which Turgenev spent three of his most productive years an absorbing and instructive scene. But what he called, in a letter to Pauline Viardot, political *"Pathos"* was not, he felt, a part of his make-up. He was educable chiefly in matters esthetic. And yet he could not remain untouched by the drama of current history. The streets of revolutionary Paris taught him the unpleasant rudiments of crowd psychology, and the logic of the class struggle, albeit the lesson made no enduring impression. The reaction which followed the upheaval of 1848 intensified his disgust with the governments, the philosophy, the art of his time.

To some of his friends, notably to Herzen, the failure of the revolution was a personal tragedy. They identified it with the bankruptcy of Western civilization. Herzen regretted that he had not accepted the rifle a workman had offered him on the Place Maubert, and died on a barricade: "I would then have taken with me to the grave two or three beliefs." His wife said that she dared not wish that her children would live, for fear that history might treat them to the horrors it had shown her. The June days which affected Herzen like a grave illness, his literary compatriot appeared to take merely as a depressing yet withal interesting spectacle. But while he seemed to turn up his nose at the nasty mess, he was being

profoundly worked upon by the atmosphere of disappointment.

Herzen did not remain disconsolate long. In his disillusion with the West he turned hopefully eastward, and like the very Slavophils whom he had laughed to scorn a few years earlier, he conceived the idea that salvation would come from the common people of his native land. But Turgenev had no such faith. Looking East and West, he cried a plague on both their houses. "An honorable man," he wrote to Mme. Viardot in the summer of 1849, "will end by not knowing where to live: the young nations are still barbarous like my dear compatriots, or else if they rise and want to advance they are crushed like the Hungarians; and the old, rotten, gangrenous nations are festering and dying." The letter goes on in a tone of dejected cynicism: "And then, who said that man is destined to be free? History proves the contrary. It was not in the spirit of the courtier that Goethe wrote his famous line: 'Man is not born to be free.' It is simply a fact, a truth, which he announced as the accurate observer that he was."

And yet Turgenev was certainly not the man to relish this particular truth. The liberal in him must have his fling at Leviathan. In writing to Mme. Viardot about a book on Napoleon, he refers to him rhetorically as the man who "organized authority, government, this hideous phantom which, unproductive, hollow, and stupid, the word Order in its mouth, a sword in one hand and gold in the other, is crushing us all under its iron heel." Paskevich's military successes in Hungary prompt this outburst: "To the devil with national sentiment! For a man with a heart there is only one fatherland,—democracy,—and if the Russians are victorious, this will receive its death-blow." Elsewhere he puts kings and soldiers on a par with hail and cholera as an indication that God may be a misanthrope. He had himself suffered a touch of cholera in 1849 and the disease became the object of a phobia.

The gesture that comes most naturally to Turgenev during this period is one of negation. This attitude is due not wholly to the malfeasance manifest in the times, but certainly in part to his inner lack of adjustment. His opinions carry a critical sting. He is impatient with contemporary art, seeing around him nothing but a mediocrity infected with exhibitionism. "We are like dogs," he

writes, "returning to their vomit. God and the devil are no more, and the advent of Man is still far off." He believes himself to be living in a desolate interregnum.

He oscillates between the pose of a romantic, fleeing to the golden islands of the past, and that of the more sober dreamer who puts his hope in the future. Finding no great general movements, such as united men in the middle ages, he looks to industry as the possible "regenerator of mankind," and concludes that "the greatest contemporary poets are the Americans, who are going to pierce the isthmus of Panama and talk of laying a transoceanic cable." There is an inescapable "post-war" flavor about his state of mind. Like the young of the nineteen-twenties, Turgenev was galled by the events which were so ugly a denial of the fine hopes of his student years. He was living in a waste land, from which he was never wholly to escape.

Here was no romantic, certainly no mystic. The faith which had been his habit in the early Berlin days was now of no more use to him than the waistcoats he had then worn. The reading of a book on Christianity moved him to write to Mme. Viardot: "You cannot imagine the painful effect produced by all the legends of martyrs which he [the author] tells you, one after another, all these processions, sacred relics, autos-da-fé, this ferocious contempt of life, this horror of women, all these wounds and all this blood." To his fascinated reading of Calderon Turgenev brought a strong distaste for unreasoning faith. He considered Calderon "the greatest Catholic dramatist," as he considered Shakspere "the most human, most anti-Christian."

Not even the formal perfection of Pascal reconciles him to the Church of Rome. The sympathetic student of the humanist Feuerbach feels that man, in sacrificing his dignity to the Divine will, and proclaiming the indifference of Grace to virtue and vice, rises to the level of that strange Divinity which is, after all, his own creation. "Nevertheless," Turgenev assures Mme. Viardot, "I prefer Prometheus, I prefer Satan, the embodiment of revolt and individuality. Atom though I am, I am my own master; I want truth, not salvation; I expect it from my intelligence and not from Grace." This was not only the language but the spirit of youth. He was

young; he was in love; he was, for a brief period, tasting the independence peculiar to poverty; he was feeling his strength.

During a stay at Hyères, he witnessed a funeral mass, and his description of the spectacle—the coffin draped with a black pall and the yellow candles—winds up with the declaration that he prefers the wide skies of the ancients, the oak-wood pyre and the games. Yet his God is no more Pan than Christ. He is inclined to identify the Deity with Nature, a force "indifferent, imperious voracious, egoistic, pervading," bringing forth a star as it brings out a pimple on the skin. He sees Nature as no less brutal than she is beautiful: "The nightingale," he says, "may throw us into delicious ecstasies while an unhappy insect is dying a painful death in its crop." The soul seems to him "a feeble radiance which ancient night eternally seeks to swallow." All life is frail. And yet he professes himself dedicated to this frailty:

> I cannot see without emotion a bough covered with young green leaves outlined clearly against the blue sky. Is it because of the contrast between this little living sprig—which sways at the mercy of the least breath, which I can break, which must die, but which a generous sap animates and colors—and that eternal and empty immensity, the sky, which is blue and radiant only owing to the earth?

He shares Heine's willingness to leave heaven to the angels and the sparrows, but whereas the poet voiced his social conscience, the future novelist voices the consciousness of the artist. He confesses to Mme. Viardot:

> I would prefer to contemplate the precipitous movements of a duck's wet foot as it scratches the back of its head on the edge of a marsh, or the long and glistening drops of water slowly falling from the muzzle of a motionless cow which has just drunk from a pond in which she stands knee-deep, rather than all that the cherubim can behold in the sky.

One might take this statement as the rationale of the method which Turgenev followed in the writing which he was doing at this time. It was now that he was composing most of his plays and the pieces that were to form "A Sportsman's Sketches." He worked hard and steadily. Neither the distractions of travel nor yet those

provided by Pauline Viardot could come between him and his manuscripts. From 1847 to 1850 he wrote at least twice as much as in any equivalent period in all the forty years of his literary activity. His mind functioned with uncommon facility and his brain tired no sooner than his hand. He wrote to Mme. Viardot during this period:

> Never have ideas come to me in such abundance. They have presented themselves by the dozen. I felt like a poor devil of an innkeeper in a small town who finds himself suddenly swamped by an avalanche of guests; he ends by losing his head and not knowing where to lodge his crowd.

In trying his hand at play-writing Turgenev was at once responding to a native impulse and yielding to that interest in the theater which was as much Pauline's as her personal effects. His sense of dramatic conflict, however, required for its expression a more leisurely medium than the drama. He grew to dislike his plays as he disliked his poems. But while he denied his verse as often as the cock crowed, he included his dramas in his complete works, as closet pieces at worst. Yet they were originally written for the stage, with particular actors in mind, and scored successes both at home and, later, abroad. It was his own dissatisfaction rather than that of his audiences which led him to renounce the idea of himself as a playwright. His most ambitious piece, "A Month in the Country," first entitled "The Student," was revived by the Moscow Art Theater for the generation that applauded Chekhov. The theme, like that of Balzac's "Marâtre," is the struggle between a girl and a mature woman for a young man's affections, and the play is a psychological piece for the intimate theater, quite in Chekhov's vein. With the exception of "The Parasite," the other plays are less serious in content, nor can the farcical element in their situations quite break through the film of dullness that covers them. These comedies were written by a man who was a regular theater-goer in Paris, night after night seeing the curtain rise on Scribe and Musset. At the same time they were the work of one who drew his materials exclusively from his native Russian background, and who painted himself into the picture like another Tintoretto.

The origin of "A Sportsman's Sketches" was more casual than the subsequent career of the book might suggest. The first sketch appeared in the initial number of "The Contemporary" (*Sovremmenik*), a Petersburg monthly to which Belinsky gave the last two years of his life, and which had been started by Turgenev's friend Nekrasov, with his own active assistance. The sketch was used as more or less of a filler, and was tucked away in the back pages among the miscellaneous items. Turgenev gave it to the editor just before leaving for the West, and with no intention of picking up the thread again. He still considered himself primarily a poet. Yet for nearly a decade he had been collecting impressions and jotting down notes which could be useful only to a prose writer. So warmly was the first piece welcomed that he soon found himself writing a series, the title of which was supplied by the editor.

The result was a group of narratives, ranging from the casual sketch to the formal short story, and concluding with a lyrical encomium to his favorite sport and its background of forest and steppe. The narrator, tacitly identified with the author, observes his neighbors at their dinner-tables and the peasants in the enforced and withal relished democracy of the hunt. These pages fill the lungs and clear the eyes. Agreeably, if a little too complacently, the story halts like a leisured traveler to abandon itself to the odors of woods and fields, the warm smell of hay and horses, to the colors of the hilly patchwork of plowed and fallow ground. Everywhere Turgenev shows that love of landscape which the painter Kuo Hsi ascribes only to the virtuous. The men and women who pass across this natural background hold to the distinct social planes on which they live and move and have their being. There are the masters and the class that keeps them. Among the serfs who catch Turgenev's eye are some who are endowed with spirituality and moral force. But on the whole he sees his peasants as rather stodgy, brutalized, and helpless. In "The Singers" he discovers a group of common people in a moment of æsthetic enjoyment which mounts to a fine frenzy, but he concludes on a sordid, homely note: the crowd drunk and turned abject; the singer in the same wretched state outside; across the foggy field, one boy calling another home to be whipped.

The men gain from contrast with their masters. These are drawn

without flattery: the cultivated gentleman who has his servant flogged for failing to warm the wine; the several landowners who sell or retain their serfs to gratify a private whim; the gentry whose fortunes fail and who get their dinners by playing the parasite. The fiery Chertopkhanov, with his exaggerated sense of honor, is the white crow of the flock. The book poses the problem of serfdom, and is thereby furnished with a dramatic element, but it is quite lacking in the militancy of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." One recognizes in this author the man who was revolted by his mother's behavior toward her serfs, but did not interfere with it. The abolitionist never shouts down the story-teller. He is a humane observer, who sides with the slaves against the master, annoying the latter, but not helping the slave, nor rousing any rebellion in him. Wisely enough, Turgenev limits his observation to house serfs or, generally speaking, peasants who have slipped out of the routine ways. The average peasant in normal circumstances—of whom he had, after all, very slight knowledge—is not in the picture.

Fully half of the tales ignore the sore subject altogether. They are socially neutral studies of people and situations. Such, for example, is "The Tryst," which defines the "great constringent relation between man and woman" in the terms of a dandified flunky aping his betters and a simple-minded peasant girl whom he is casually dismissing from his affections. Such, again, is the tale of the country doctor and a death-bed passion told in a manner which anticipates Chekhov. "The Hamlet of the Shchigry District" is the history of a neurotic acutely aware of his maladjustment, the type that Dostoyevsky was to vivisect more ably in "Notes from the Underground" some twelve years later. This sketch contains a jaundiced version of Turgenev's German period and bears traces of self-analysis and self-flagellation. The note of wistful retrospection which sounds throughout his work yields here to scorn and skepticism.

On the whole, the manner which he employs in this book is to be rejected later for a more generous and more objective attitude. He is still the disciple of Gogol, that master of caricature, and enjoys snapping the whip of a facile irony, but even at this early period Turgenev's work shows a stronger response to the normal than

Gogol's ever did. There is little drama here, and the general effect is that of a pastel drawing. His interest in details shows him more observant than penetrating, with the result that he sometimes gives the impression of a reporter, incurious of motives. And indeed, journalism is a common apprenticeship for the novelist.

One also recognizes the man who never completely identifies himself with the peasant and his point of view, the man who remains, as far as his realization of life is concerned, the creature of his caste. The author is sensitive to nature and the moods of nature as one brought up in the country is likely to be, but he lacks the sense of the soil which dominates him who has tilled it. Aside from a desire to expose the condition of the masses, there worked in Turgenev a deeply rooted interest in simple, whole-hearted people. It was this as much as anything that moved him to choose the peasant as his model. Such an interest was natural to an unintegrated personality with a neurotic strain.

CHAPTER XIV

"BONNE NUIT, MAMAN"

PARIS and Courtavenel alike had roused in Turgenev a nostalgia traces of which appear in "A Sportsman's Sketches." His thoughts kept returning to the shapes, the odors, the colors, of his native scene: unkempt villages, the thatched roofs huddling together under a mild sky; caravans of slow carts creaking along dust-padded roads; white, humble churches rising out of the dun plain; an unhurried beggar etched against the green hemp-patch; the moist smell of the forests; and the tilled fields, huge and monotonous, hunching themselves slightly on the horizon and rolling on beyond. On a summer day in 1849 he saw a gray crow in the fields around the château. "The sight of this compatriot moves me," he wrote to Mme. Viardot. "I take off my hat to him and ask him for news of my country." He turned the incident into a joke, making a quatrain on it à la Béranger. But, for all his homesickness, he was returning to Russia with a heavy heart.

To the ache of separation from Pauline Viardot was added the disagreeable foretaste of what he might expect at home. He knew very well that the country was in the vise of the White Terror which the events of 1848 had inaugurated, and that his aloofness from politics would afford him small protection. Official corruption was as naked as Noah. People who entertained independent opinions con-

cealed them as though they were fugitive slaves. Several weeks before his departure Turgenev wrote to Mme. Viardot:

Russia will wait; that immense and somber figure, motionless and veiled like the Sphinx of Œdipus. It will swallow me later. It seems to me I see it fixing its heavy inert look upon me with gloomy attention, as it behooves eyes of stone. Be calm, Sphinx; I shall come back to you, and you will be able to devour me at your ease if I don't guess your riddle! Let me be in peace for some time yet! I shall come back to your steppes!

His pleasure in returning to Spasskoye was considerably flattened by the prospect of facing its mistress, with whom he was not on the best of terms, and whose temper had scarcely been improved by illness. Varvara Petrovna was exasperated with hope deferred. In the summer of 1848 she had been preparing for the reception of her "Benjamin," as she liked to call her absent son. But he did not come, and in a fit of pique she cut his allowance. The next winter she again pressed him to return and sent him six hundred rubles. In the summer Spasskoye resumed preparations against his coming. His wing was being renovated and the flower garden put in order. The poplar-circled pond where as a boy he had gone sailing with his brother Nicholas, and which had dried up, was now being cleaned; and on the bank facing the highroad Varvara Petrovna erected a sign-post with the inscription *"Ils reviendront."* But no son of hers came along that road. Ivan informed his mother that he needed six thousand rubles to settle his debts. There was no reply. If it had not been for lack of money he might have returned sooner. It was only in the spring of 1850, when she became seriously ill, that the necessary rubles were sent him and he came home.

Varvara Petrovna received him in her town house in Moscow with every sign of rejoicing. By that time her elder son, with his impossible spouse, was also living there. Varvara Petrovna had summoned him from Petersburg, and recognized his marriage on condition that he retire from the service and manage her affairs for her. She went as far as buying a house for him, and giving him servants, but failed to provide the means of running it, thus creating an intolerable situation for him. Ivan did not fare very much better.

His mother gave him generously of her time, but was niggardly in supplying him with pocket-money, so that he borrowed change from the servants to pay his cabmen. At the same time she made mock of her sons by showering expensive gifts on her adopted daughter. Her maternal passion was as selfish as it was violent. It had in it more than a tinge of the sadism which was her rightful heritage. She tried to hold her children by the shortsighted expedient of keeping them financially dependent upon her.

When Ivan remonstrated with her about his brother's plight, forbearing to mention his own, she consented to deed each of them a piece of property. The deeds were actually made out, but in such a form as to be invalid—a fact which she knew, which they knew, and which she knew they knew. Upon receiving the farcical documents the two sons did not thank her, but on leaving they said, *"Bonne nuit, Maman,"* and kissed her hand as usual. She made the sign of the cross over them as she had done for thirty years, yet as she dealt out the cards for her game of patience, Bibi, sitting in the next room, saw her fine white hands, reflected in the mirror, tremble. There was no method in her madness. Although she actually retained the properties, she secretly ordered the crops thereon sold at any price, so that there was not even seed-grain left. The morning after the comedy the brothers held a council of war, and decided to take possession of Turgenevo, their father's little estate, which was their inheritance, and to remove thither.

When Ivan paid his usual visit to his mother that forenoon she cruelly kept up the pretense of having made her sons independent. This broke the camel's back. Losing control of his tongue, he asked his mother the purpose of the farce she had enacted, declared that she was making a vain parade of her power over them, and that no one could be happy near her. He concluded by saying that neither he nor Nicholas wanted anything from her, and would try to make out on what their father had left them. Her retort was to cry out in her irritatingly nasal voice that she no longer had children, and to fly into a passion. Ivan moved to Nicholas's house and never saw his mother again. The next morning she received a letter from Nicholas advising her of their plan to remove to Turgenevo. When Ivan called she refused to see him, and dashed to the floor the por-

trait of him which had stood on her desk since his student days in Berlin. Later in the day, finding that they had carried out their threat, she again flew into a passion. The unhappy woman then left for Spasskoye.

Her son, at Turgenevo, was hardly well off. Separation from Pauline Viardot gave an edge to his passion. For what he now expressed in his tireless letters to her was no less than passion. He had sufficient reasons for feeling forlorn, and he reached out for comfort to his recollections of Courtavenel and to the "dear, good, excellent friend" whose home it was. "I see you walking on the grass of Courtavenel," he wrote, "a guitar in your hand. . . . And my memory for places brings back to me at this very moment the sky, the trees, your dress with the brown pattern, your gray hat. It seems to me I feel on my face the light autumnal breeze which whispered in the apple-trees above us." Autumn was bleak in Turgenevo. He watched the cranes flying across the sky and listened to their crying, until it seemed that they taunted him because they could go southward while he must remain alone in the snows.

Petersburg did not distract him. "Not a day passes but the beloved memory of you comes to me a hundred times. Not a night passes without my dreaming of you." On the seventh anniversary of his meeting with Louis Viardot, which happened to coincide with his thirty-second birthday, he wrote to Pauline: "I rejoice to say that in these seven years I have found no one better than you; that to have met you on my way was the greatest happiness of my life; that my devotion and gratitude to you are limitless and will die only with me." Present, she enchanted him; absent, she brought him literally to her feet. "Oh, God," he wrote to her in German, "I would like to lay my whole life as a carpet beneath your beloved feet, which I kiss a thousand times. You know that I belong to you wholly and forever." The seventh anniversary of his meeting with Pauline herself occasioned this protestation:

> I am happy to feel after seven years the same profound, sincere, unalterable sentiment dedicated to you. The consciousness of it acts upon me benignly and penetratingly, like a bright ray of sunlight. Happiness seems to be my lot, since I have deserved that the reflection of your life

should mingle with mine. As long as I live I shall try to be worthy of such happiness. I have respected myself since I began to bear that treasure within me.

At the moment when the curtain rose upon a play of his ("A Woman from the Provinces") the nervous playwright whispered Pauline Viardot's name to himself to bring him success, which it did. It was Turgenev's distinction to receive from his lady at this time, aside from the usual gifts of letters and pressed flowers, a unique token. A letter in which he asks permission to dedicate "A Sportsman's Sketches" to her, concludes: "A thousand greetings to all," and in German: "And as for you, I kiss your feet for hours on end. A thousand thanks for the darling finger-nails." A letter written a fortnight later ends as follows: "I want to live and die at your dear feet. I kiss them for hours, and I remain your friend forever."

When Turgenev had returned from France he discovered that little Pelagea, his daughter by his mother's seamstress, had suffered from more than her father's neglect. He found her pitiably circumstanced in the care of one of Varvara Petrovna's laundresses. He decided that something must be done, and laid his problem before Mme. Viardot: "I want there to be nothing about me," he wrote to her, "that you do not know. Nine years ago I was staying in the country, and I was bored. My attention was attracted to a rather pretty seamstress hired by my mother. I whispered a word to her and she came to me. I gave her some money and then I left. . . . In due time this woman became what might be expected; the rest you know." He continued that all he could do for the mother was to protect her from want. As for the child, he declared, "It is necessary that she should forget her mother completely." Mme. Viardot offered to take the little girl, who was then eight years old, and bring her up with her own children.

Pelagea, who was to be known hereafter as Pauline, was accordingly shipped to Paris in October. On November 29 the father wrote: "Little Pauline must be in Paris by this time, if nothing happened to her on the way. I thank you in advance for the caresses which you will give her and the kindness with which you will surround her. I repeat, the only thing I told her in parting was that

she must adore you as her God. In this she will not be alone. She, of all people, must not think of you except with hands folded and knees bent." Falling into German again, he begs Mme. Viardot to permit the child to kiss her hands often: "Remember, that if they are not my lips, they are lips which are near to me." And on November 26:

Little Pauline has arrived. She pleases you and you have already become fond of her. Dear, dear friend, you are an angel! Every word in your letter breathes inexpressible tenderness, kindness, gentleness. How can I help falling madly in love with the little girl? . . . I repeat, I shall end by becoming genuinely attached to her as soon as I learn that you love her. . . . I feel that Pauline is becoming dear to me because she is with you.

Two weeks later he writes: "I like to imagine her heart in your hands," adding in German: "You know why. My life and my heart lie there also, as before. You have not let it drop, have you?" With the humorless egotism tolerable in a lover but rather graceless in a parent, he writes: "I implore you when you receive this letter, call in Pauline and allow her to kiss your hands, both hands, you hear? And think of me while she enjoys that happiness. Then write me that you did so." Three days later:

I have just received, dearest, most precious, worshiped friend, the dear letter in which you give me so many details about Pauline. . . . Well, if *our* daughter is a good and affectionate little girl, all the better. You see, I told you that she worships you. Yes, she does worship you. I feel it with all my heart. What else could you expect? Is she not my daughter? Please send me the drawing of her which you made and let her write underneath: "Pauline, drawn by Mamma."

While Turgenev was making this tardy provision for his daughter, his mother lay dying in Moscow. After the quarrel he had written to her several times, but she did not reply, and his secret visits to Spasskoye to inquire after her health never afforded him a glimpse of her. Toward the end the dropsical old lady, immured in her gloomy old Moscow house, sustained her life on grapes and fruit ices. Her sole occupation was to pencil some shocking remark in

the journal which she kept on the shelf attached to the side of her big mahogany bed.

She became curiously apathetic, as though the cumulative pains and passions of her thwarted girlhood, her unsatisfactory marriage, and her disappointed motherhood, which had defeated her body, were also sapping the obstinate insolence of her spirit. When her time came she received the viaticum, but it is doubtful whether she, who a few years previously had spoken of retiring to a nunnery, died like a Christian. On December 6, 1850, Turgenev was writing to Pauline about his mother:

> Her last days were very sad. May the Lord preserve us all from such a death! She only tried to stupefy herself. On the eve of her death, when the death-rattle had already begun, an orchestra was playing polonaises in the next room, by her orders. . . . In her final moments my mother thought of nothing else, shameful to say, but of ruining us—me and my brother. In her last letter, written to her steward, she gave him a clear and explicit order to sell everything for a song, to burn everything if necessary, in order to . . . [ruin us].

The unnatural mother had her elder son with her when she lay on her death-bed, but Ivan was notified so late that when he reached Moscow she had already been buried. Her diary fell into the hands of the brothers, and gave Ivan a sleepless night. "What a woman!" he wrote to Mme. Viardot. ". . . May the Lord forgive her everything. But what a life!"

The brothers divided the land (the old lady had not left any money) between them, Spasskoye, with other estates totaling some fifteen thousand acres, going to Ivan. The new *barin* made generous provision for his mother's personal servants and set at liberty many of the house serfs, all of whom the deceased had neglected in her will. He did not, however, attempt to free his peasants,—the male "souls" alone numbered one thousand nine hundred and fifteen —and for the ten years that were to elapse before the Emancipation Act he remained in possession of what his friend Herzen called "baptised property." But he was a conscience-stricken slave-owner, ashamed of his privileges and awkward in his enjoyment of them.

His meekness in dealing with his subjects was made up partly of uneasiness and partly of his wretched inability to assert himself. Naturally, they took advantage of their "blind" master (his pince-nez had won him the nickname). He had granted some of his freedmen land close to the manor, and it is said that the grateful recipients cut off the path to a certain well whose water was particularly prized by their benefactor. An anecdote, attributed to Turgenev himself, beautifully illustrates his abject helplessness. He is driving to a neighbor's in his own carriage, drawn by his own horses, both the driver and the footman being his own serfs. He is in a great hurry. Suddenly the carriage comes to a halt. After many patient minutes he looks out and sees his two men on the box playing cards! He withdraws his impertinent head and the game proceeds. When his men are quite finished, the journey is resumed.

PART II

MIDDLE YEARS: 1851–68

Great genial power, one would almost say, consists in not being original at all; in being altogether receptive; in letting the world do all, and suffering the spirit of the hour to pass unobstructed through the mind.

EMERSON

CHAPTER XV

THE CROWN OF MARTYRDOM

HE lean years had now come to an end. Turgenev's annual income, as he wrote to Mme. Viardot, amounted to the handsome sum of twenty-five thousand francs. True, that carelessness about money matters which had exasperated his mother, even now left him sometimes short of ready cash. But his properties were so large that even though they were woefully mismanaged, for some time he continued to be fairly well off. For a while he stayed with his brother in Moscow. His presence made the old house on Ostozhenka a magnet for some members of the former Belinsky circle, such as Granovsky, the historian, Ketcher, the patient if uninspired translator of Shakspere, and the son of a rich tea-merchant, Vasily Botkin, a gifted, self-taught amateur of the arts.

But the place was uncongenial. Most of his time and money he spent in Petersburg, making occasional visits to Moscow, and going on long hunting-trips. The years had worn off his youthful angles, and even if his friend Annenkov found in him the "puerile vices" of earlier days, he also discovered those "amiable qualities of the soul and mind" which impressed so many others. Fresh luster had been added to the gloss of European culture which he had early acquired, his mind had been fed and his talk mellowed.

He was naturally welcomed in the drawing-rooms, and, as the

celebrated author of "A Sportsman's Sketches" and of several successful plays, he was deferred to in the meeting-places of the literati. Already budding writers were inviting his opinion on their efforts. Turgenev responded generously. One of these young men, in describing a first interview, drew a portrait of him as a broad-shouldered giant, with a sharp aristocratic profile, and large, well-cared-for hands, cutting more of a figure than his heroes ever could. He was as careful of his person as his mother had been of hers, and imitated her in taking special pains with his hair. He was always to keep his thick silky mop, but like Shelley, grew gray early, and in his thirties he was quite grizzled. In 1854 a cabby, seeing him run downhill, observed to him sententiously: "Yes, that 's what a hill is; it makes even an old man run." Turgenev's gray head on his young shoulders made him an interesting figure to the ladies. But an acquaintance not affected either by his literary halo or his sex, saw merely a large man with a weak mouth and a skull padded with fat, who gave the impression of being as soft as butter.

Turgenev was the most distinguished figure in the group which hung about "The Contemporary." This was a close confraternity, in a sense a closed corporation, whose shrewd and not always scrupulous business head was Nekrasov, a poet as well as a publisher. The intimates who made up the group were bound to one another by friendships of long standing, by the fact that they were all of the gentry, by a common interest in a literature which placed Russia beside the Western nations, by a fund of sharp wit which found vent in elaborate hoaxes and occasionally in mere ribaldry. Turgenev defended the latter on the grounds that, being perpetrated in the reign of Nicholas I, it was, like the Decameron, the effort of revelers in time of plague.

On February 21, 1852, Gogol died in Moscow. Turgenev's admiration for the author of "Dead Souls" was perhaps exceeded only by his worship of Pushkin. He had met the great humorist but once, a few months before the latter's death, although he had sat under him years previously during Gogol's brief professorship. Turgenev carried away from the visit the memory of a keen, healthless man, with a schoolmaster's manner, and measured emphatic speech, coming through bad teeth. Slight as was Turgenev's knowl-

edge of the man, he wore mourning for the writer. "I may say without exaggeration," he wrote to a friend, "that never within my memory did anything make a greater impression on me than Gogol's death. . . . The tragic fate of Russia is reflected in the fate of those of us who are nearest to its heart."

Indeed, coming as it did at the very height of the reaction, Gogol's death shook the more sensitive as the sound of a slamming door makes a nervous man quake. "Truly, it seems to me," Turgenev said in another letter, "that dark, silent waters have closed over my head and I am sinking to the bottom, growing cold and numb." He wrote an obituary notice for a Petersburg paper, sobbing aloud over it. The article did not pass the censor. In spite of his professed orthodoxy, Gogol, being a writer, was therefore a suspect character, and a eulogy of a mere pen-pusher was in itself considered seditious in high places. Turgenev sent his rejected manuscript to Botkin in Moscow, with the request that he get it published, which he did, the Moscow censor being ignorant of the fact that the article had been prohibited in Petersburg. There was nothing unlawful about the proceeding, but when the matter was reported to the emperor he ordered Turgenev arrested. The prisoner's lodging was sealed, but not searched. He spent a month in jail and was then sent to his estate to live for an indefinite period under police surveillance.

The month during which he was confined in the station-house was not without its pleasant distractions. For one thing, he could not complain of solitude. The narrow street on which the jail looked out was jammed with the carriages of his visitors. For a whole fortnight his name was declined tirelessly in the drawing-rooms of the capital. A middle-aged female admirer sent him an icon and some soda powders. Young girls with husbands in their pretty heads were at pains to walk past his window, and favored him with pressed flowers sewn upon pale-blue note-paper. Nor did he subsist on the coarse prison fare. His dinners came regularly from Mme. Panayev's kitchen. He did not go dry, either, and after twenty years he was to regale his Parisian friends with the story of how the police captain, drunk on his prisoner's excellent champagne, nudged his elbow and lifted his own glass with a husky: "To Robespierre!"

Another of his prison anecdotes was that his cell, which was next to the room where convicted serfs received their floggings, contained the records of the station-house and that he amused himself by examining the secret files. The cell was small and extremely stuffy. The prisoner invented an ingenious way of getting his constitutional in these cramped quarters. Twice a day he carried every card of two packs from one corner of the room to the other and back again, —making altogether four hundred and sixteen trips, a walk of about a mile and a half. All these various diversions afforded him sufficient leisure to write "Moomoo" and to study Polish. This last occupation was a source of worry to one of his friends, since it was folly, she wrote him, for a prisoner to be learning the tongue of Russia's hereditary enemy under the very eyes of the police.

When, in May, he went to Spasskoye at his emperor's instance, he probably traveled over the new railway between St. Petersburg and Moscow, virtually the first railroad to be built in Russia, its sole predecessor being a suburban line connecting the capital with Tsarskoe-Selo. Turgenev was condemned to keep to his estate indefinitely. The emotions of the native returning home is a subject upon which the novelist wrote many profoundly evocative pages. Once more the triumph of time over faces and furniture thrust itself upon him. Once more he was in the midst of the placid, drowsy country life which appeared to Lavretzky, the hero of "A House of Gentlefolk," to move as inaudibly as water among marsh grasses. Once more he was surrendering himself to the rural ennui which both liberated and depressed him. The contrast between the clipped, civilized landscape of western Europe and the rude immensity of the home scene was in itself dispiriting. There the very soil spoke of man, his mastering will, his cumulative labors, his solid heritage; here the human creature was nearly obliterated by a vast plain, the surface of which he just scratched, and which barely suffered his flimsy habitations. The empty solitude of these fields, the shapelessness and sameness of the land had a hypnotizing, enervating effect.

Two years had passed since the walls of the Spasskoye manor had watched Varvara Petrovna's matchless rages, and her son must sometimes have wanted just a moment of her querulous presence, and often

have missed, in the unkempt house, her careful eye and stern hand. He was persistently annoyed by the local police. The agent who was charged with his surveillance and who never approached him without doffing his cap, noted in his memorandum-book that Turgenev eyed him as though he were a devil.

What was most irksome to the prisoner was the fact that he could neither go to Moscow to consult a physician nor to Petersburg to hear Pauline sing. He petitioned the Heir Apparent and General Dubbelt, and Count Orlov, Chief of the Gendarmerie, for the removal of the restriction imposed upon him, but in vain. His appeal to the Heir, made in April, 1853, began as follows: "I heartily repent my guilt, albeit involuntary, and not desiring to be reckoned a wilful rebel, I make bold to lay before your Imperial Highness my very humble petition." Of course, the author of this petition knew as well as anybody that his arrest and deportation was a most revolting case of administrative arbitrariness, executed in violation of the law of the empire.

Meanwhile he had to content himself with the provincial society in the neighborhood. He was exaggerating when he wrote to a friend: "I am not dead yet, but the deep solitude in which I live gives me an idea of the silence which awaits us beyond the grave." As a matter of fact, his neighbor, the poet Foeth, calling on Turgenev in defiance of his family, who feared association with a reprobate, found the latter "surrounded by ladies as a honey-pot by flies." He had continual companionship in the manager of the estate, one Tyutchev, and that gentleman's relatives. Indeed, they succeeded in interfering with him almost as much as his mother had done. Turgenev was not one to insist on his rights, and so Tyutchev (whom he had chosen in preference to his tight-fisted brother Nicholas, fearing that the latter would be too hard on the peasants) genially usurped the place of the master of the manor. The deportee found himself relegated to a wing. There is an obscure tale that the Tyutchevs even made an attempt upon his celibacy, and certainly he would have made a very good match for his manager's sister-in-law, a tearful maiden who abused the piano of an evening.

He hungered for music as men hunger for meat, and he prevailed upon Mme. Tyutchev and her sister to give him what makeshift for it

they could. They played, four-handed, Mozart, Beethoven, Mendelsohn, and Weber. He describes these musicales to Mme. Viardot: "I stand behind the ladies' chairs, I turn the leaves, and I conduct. In moments of enthusiasm I cannot prevent myself from emitting something in the nature of horribly false notes under the pretext of singing, which cause nervous spasms to all present." He preferred singing to any other form of music, "but in my throat," he wrote many years later, "instead of a voice sits a scrofulous sucking pig."

He had another diversion at Spasskoye in the shape of a serf-girl possessed of a bad memory and rare beauty. The story goes that he bought her from a cousin of his for seven hundred rubles,—an ordinary maid then costing fifty rubles at most,—but a kinder view would suggest that he purchased her freedom with that sum. Although he assured Mme. Viardot that he wanted her to know everything about him, he never, as far as can be discovered, mentioned this affair to her, and indeed it was only in 1915 that anything definite became known about it. That year there came to light a letter of his written in 1865, in which he says:

> In 1852, '52, and '53 a girl by the name of Feoktista with whom I had a liaison lived with me here [at Spasskoye] and in Petersburg. . . . Eventually I helped her to get married to a small functionary in the Naval Ministry and she is now flourishing in Petersburg. When she left me in 1853 she was with child, and in Moscow she gave birth to a son, Ivan, whom she placed in an asylum. I have sufficient ground to believe that he is not my child. I cannot, however, be absolutely certain of it. He may be, after all, of my own making.

We gather from the rest of the letter that Feoktista lost sight of her child, who was transferred from the institution to the care of a peasant in a village the name of which escaped the mother's memory. It appears that he fared ill there and passed into the hands of a lady who was subsequently taken sick and left her charge, to go to a hospital. At the writing the mother was on her way to Moscow to find her son, and en route she stopped at Spasskoye, as Turgenev has it, "to get a look at me." His letter was to serve her as an introduction to a friend of the writer, and requested the man to help Feoktista in her search. "If this Ivan is alive, and should be found," the letter concludes, "I am ready to place him in a trade school and

pay for him. . . . The husband knows nothing; or rather, he is a very meek and decent sort." The fate of the woman and her child is unknown.

The first summer of his exile, a cold and rainy one, Turgenev spent in relative idleness, frequently ailing. In the autumn he exchanged the pen for the fowling-piece. A harsh winter set in early that year, and as Turgenev's passion for sport shrank with the cold, he returned "to human feelings and ideas," as he wrote, "like a drunkard after his drinking-spell." This was the first winter that he had spent in the country since his boyhood, and it was also to be the last. He evoked the white season, as it must then have presented itself to him, in "Fathers and Children": "the cruel silence of the cloudless frosts, firm creaking snow, pink hoarfrost on the trees, a sky of pale emerald, caps of smoke on the chimneys, puffs of steam from doors opened for a moment, faces looking fresh as though bitten, and the bustling trot of chilled horses."

It was a season of leisure and literature for him. He had a substantial library consisting mostly of eighteenth-century books, and there were occasional games of chess. But in spite of these distractions, the hibernal scene afflicted him with melancholy. He had always been afraid of the sky, and now the earth itself had the sky's blank insubstantial immensity. He wrote to Mme. Viardot that work and reminiscence was all that was left to him. "But that work may be easy and memories less bitter, I need your letters, with the sounds of a happy and active life, with the smell of sun and poetry, which they bring me. By the way, always inclose with your letters some grass or flowers."

With a blizzard hammering at his windows and a phrase from Gounod's "Autumn" running through his head, he recalls to his friend the siestas under the poplars at Courtavenel, with the leaves dropping about them from a fretwork of boughs against an incredible blue. He has but to shut his eyes to see it—a beauty which he fears he may never know again. "Let 's sit down side by side," he says to Diana, the flesh-colored piebald English setter whom he had brought with him from France, "and summon up the days at Courtavenel." He writes to Mme. Viardot that if he ever sees her again, the only thing he will be able to do is "weep for joy." When spring comes

he dreams of his happiness were Pauline to walk with him in the Spasskoye garden to the singing of his nightingales and the call of the cuckoos.

But if he occasionally plumed himself on the rôle of another Ovid, he did not fail to perceive that the uses of adversity were sweet. There were moments when he was glad he was not in Petersburg. He had formed plans of using his enforced leisure to enlarge his education. He expected, he told Mme. Viardot, to continue his studies of the Russians, "that most astonishing and singular people in the world." And indeed his idleness fostered his industry. At Spasskoye he could control his diversions better than he could in the capital, with the continual demands that society there made upon him.

Further, the contacts which the country afforded were such as to gratify the artist if not exactly to entertain the man. He could regard his provincial neighbors with an objectivity difficult to apply to his familiars, and certainly not to be relished by the latter. Here was, after all, a side of Russian life that he had been away from for so long that it was virtually new to him. Here, with greater assurance than in a more sophisticated scene, he could participate, without ever ceasing to play his own little game, without ever blinking his acutely observant eye.

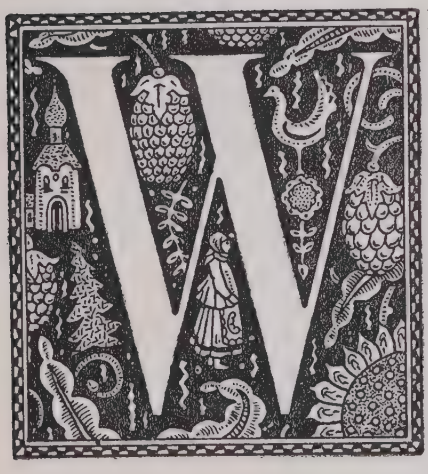
He was like the narrator in his story "Asya": "I enjoyed going where others went, shouting when others shouted, and at the same time I liked to look at the others shouting." In the country people were less likely to notice that while he shouted he was looking at them. That his friends noticed it and were discomfited by it has been given as the probable explanation of the disagreeable impression which he sometimes made. Thus, Herzen's wife, a discerning and sensitive woman, felt in Turgenev's presence as though she were in an uninhabited room: "There is dampness on the walls and it gets into your bones, and you are afraid to sit anywhere or to touch anything, and the only thing you want is to get out into the open as soon as possible."

In the same breath she speaks of how she was chilled and repelled by what she calls his "microscopic view," that is, his habit of minutely examining the nose or the leg or some feature of the dress instead of the whole person under his eye. She found Turgenev a

"good man," and declared him easy to get on with, "but after he is gone," she said, "there is nothing left; perhaps because he is too unconcerned about me, our relationship is as light as a soap-bubble." One suspects that most persons with whom he had to do found him similarly unconcerned, unconsciously preserving the distance which would give him the correct perspective.

CHAPTER XVI

A MAN OF LETTERS



HILE Turgenev was confined to Spasskoye, a Petersburg publisher was bringing out in book form "A Sportsman's Sketches." July 18, 1852, was the date of publication. Circumstances had prepared a peculiar atmosphere for the reception of the work. Cultivated people applauded it because it allowed them to feel that their own sentiments on the vexing subject of serfdom were shared, and indeed neatly defined, by another cultivated person of distinguished literary gifts. The volume took on the guise of a political act. The salons labeled it "an incendiary book," and the Minister of Education, in a secret report to the emperor, treated it as a dangerous piece of writing, likely to cause disrespect on the part of the lower classes toward their rightful superiors. The Westernists declared it to be a testimony to the human dignity of the brutalized peasant. Nationalist opinion held it to be an indirect encomium to the incorruptible native soul which survives among the masses under the worst conditions. Both factions saw in it a powerful, and probably a calculated, attack on serfdom.

Of course, Belinsky's friend and disciple heartily disliked this national institution. He would have been more outspoken, had it not been for the muffling effect of censorship. Of the eight stories which he sketched out but never wrote for the volume, one which would certainly have been debarred by the censor has for its theme

the murder of a landowner by his serfs. The man had been steadily robbing them of their land, and was known among them as the "land-eater." They avenged themselves by cramming several pounds of excellent black earth down his throat, the cook standing by and pressing it upon his master's palate. When Turgenev, at a riper age and in an expansive mood, considered his own epitaph, he expressed the wish that it might refer to the services of "A Sportsman's Sketches" toward the cause of emancipation. "The Emperor Alexander," he said, "had me informed that, among other things, the reading of my book led him to free the serfs." This epitaph was never written, nor was Edmond About's suggestion carried out, that Turgenev's sole monument should be a pedestal bearing a slave's broken chain.

As a matter of fact, although the effect of the book in shaping abolitionist opinion is unquestionable, its author did not have the temper of a reformer. At heart he was a non-combatant. He sympathized with Montaigne, that skeptic in an age of faith, that observer in an age of action. "If I had been Cicero," he is credited with saying, "I confess that after the battle of Pharsalia I should have cringed before Cæsar even more than he did. He was a man of letters, and to a man of letters politics is poison." It was a poison at which this disciple of Belinsky's could never refrain from nibbling.

With the appearance of "A Sportsman's Sketches" between covers, Turgenev felt more than ever that he was come to the turning of the road. Exile seemed a gate closing upon his youth and leaving him upon the sober plateau of middle age, where he was to remain until he adopted, with equal precocity, the attitudes of an elderly gentleman. It was now that he began to feel what the bulk of his work was to emphasize: that after thirty-five a man is finished. For a time he endured one of the fits of despondency which assaulted him with the periodicity of hay-fever. He announced to Pauline that his life was over: he had eaten all his white bread and must hereafter chew what remained of the black. Usually with such an attack went the decision to give up writing forever. This time he thought only of resigning his old literary manner. He felt that now if ever the moment had come when he must concentrate, and consciously direct his energies. From a subsequent letter it appears that this effort at concentration did not prove effective. He discovered that

he was the sort that needs the stimulus of constant contact with the outside world. What was certain was that he must "take another road," as he wrote to a friend on his thirty-fourth birthday.

I must find it, and give up my old manner forever. I have done enough of extracting the triple essence from human character, of pouring it into small bottles: "Sniff it, please, gentle reader, uncork it and sniff it. It has the Russian bouquet, has n't it?" Enough, enough. But the question is, am I capable of something great and calm? Am I going to succeed with clear simple outlines? That I don't know, and I sha'n't know until I try. But believe me, you will hear something new from me, or you will hear nothing. For that reason I am almost glad of my winter seclusion. I shall have the time to collect myself; and, above all, in solitude one is away from things, literary and journalistic especially. I shall become somebody only when the litterateur is destroyed in me.

This self-estimate, while not wholly acceptable, presents his problem without indirection. He wanted to deal plainly with the great commonplaces of existence. He was seeking the achievement of an objective style. He came to identify both with the Pushkin as opposed to the Gogol tradition, to which most of his early work belonged. He was feeling more and more, as he said, where Gogol's shoe pinched. He was beginning to be sensible of the need for seeing life steadily and seeing it whole. "The striving after impartiality and integral truth," he wrote, "is one of the few good qualities for which I am grateful to Nature, who gave them to me."

Meanwhile, "simplicity, calm, clarity of line, conscientious craftsmanship, that conscientiousness which derives from certainty"—all this was merely an ideal which beckoned him. He put off the writing of the novel whose elements had been fermenting in him for years, because of this lack of self-confidence. But he was continually teased and prodded by his literary impulse, and he had the uneasy knowledge that life would not wait for him to make up his mind. His friends also were urging him in the direction of a large work. Annenkov wrote paternally:

I certainly expect a novel from you, with full control over all the characters and events, and without taking voluptuous pleasure in your

own self, that is in your authorship, and without the sudden appearance of odd fellows of whom you are all too fond, and finally, all the miseries, contradictions and absurdities should not display themselves coquettishly as is sometimes the case in your writings, but should appear unostentatiously, without suspecting that any one is looking at them. If you write it, the Sketches will be doubly remarkable, first in themselves, and second as a stepping-stone.

During his exile, Turgenev finally prevailed upon himself, or was prevailed upon, to begin a novel. In February, 1853, he was "tunneling through it like a mole." He wrote the first part of it, amounting to twelve chapters, and sent the manuscript around to his friends for an opinion. This deference to criticism was a habit which, as a mature "middle-aged" man, he should have given up, but which he was never to outgrow. The consensus was unfavorable, the objection being that the piece was dull and too biographical, and so this first experiment was never concluded. The fragment of the work, which was published some years later, presents what is substantially a portrait of the flighty generalissimo who was Turgenev's mother. One familiar with Varvara Petrovna's memoranda and letters recognizes how much he is the photographer here.

He looked forward with some dread to a second winter in the country, but he was spared that cup. The humble petition which he addressed to the heir apparent on the anniversary of his imprisonment was tabled by Count Orlov. But some writers and influential friends notably Count Alexis Tolstoy, the poet, interfered, and Orlov informed the emperor of the exile's repentance, suggesting that in his opinion Turgenev had already been taught a good lesson. The emperor graciously consented to forgive the culprit, with the understanding that he should be kept under the strictest surveillance during his residence in the capital. The surveillance was lifted by the manifesto of August 26, 1856, issued when Alexander II was formally crowned. He had come to the throne the previous year, but had postponed the coronation ceremonies until the close of the Crimean War, in which the country was engaged.

In December, 1853, Turgenev was again in Petersburg, installed in Povarskoy Lane, under the care of his cook Stepan, whom he

had brought with him from Spasskoye. His rooms showed more than the usual disorder to be found in bachelors' apartments. He was the sort of man who is at the mercy of his servants. The domestic chaos that he suffered was enough to make his mother turn in her grave—she who had governed her household with such harsh pedantry; she who had kept an inventory of the family wardrobe, even to Ivan's wadded green-silk dressing-gown, with a note of the date on which it had been presented to him; she who had written down opposite each day's menu each day's fault-findings. Thus she had been at pains to note that her sausages were not so good as Mme. Krylov's, that she must find out where the best pickled cucumbers were to be bought, that it was now unfashionable to shoot champagne corks at the ceiling, and that if you don't warn your maids about bedbugs, you are likely, as she was, to be bitten out of a night's sleep.

Her son, while equally fastidious in the matter of sausages and bedbugs, was generally too lazy to admonish his servants to secure the one or to destroy the other. As a result, his valet was apt to be indifferent as to whether the master dressed in a cold room or a warm one. A friend coming in to see him one chilly morning found him arguing with his man on the subject, and finally crying out with a kind of peevish humor: "All right: you 're clever and I 'm a fool, but for pity's sake, I have enough sense to know when I 'm cold!" He had not outgrown the habits of the young student who wrote love-letters for his valet in Berlin. Where to be born to one's caste is more a matter of course than to be born with five wits, familiarity is likely to reach good-naturedly across the impregnable wall.

Before returning to the capital Turgenev had written to Annenkov that he intended to live there very modestly, devoting himself solely to "literary work, a circle of friends, music, and chess. . . . It 's time for me to settle down. It 's not for nothing that I have turned as gray as a rat." But he could not keep this resolution. Life in the country had sharpened his taste for social commerce. His literary friends of the "Contemporary" circle gave him a dinner to celebrate his liberation, following it up with several less formal symposia. He was renewing acquaintance not merely with men of his own way of thinking, but also with such professed nationalists

as the Aksakovs, especially Aksakov senior, who was less of a doctrinaire than his two sons, Constantine and Ivan, the Peter and Paul of Slavophilism. For a little time they thought that here was a chance of making a proselyte. But as a matter of fact they mistook the interest which Turgenev shared with them in Russian history and Russia's future for agreement with their proud prognostications.

Their hopes of him were shattered in the course of a visit which he paid them in January, 1855, at Abramtzevo, their estate near Moscow, where he had spent a few days with these friends some months before. On this second occasion the place swarmed with guests, so that Vera, the daughter of the house, noted in her diary that after dinner the drawing-room looked like a Moscow rout. There were sleigh-rides over the immaculate snow, naps to fortify the company against the long meals and longer talks, philological discussions between Constantine Aksakov and the young linguist Hilferding which made Turgenev wring his hands and furnished a target for his best jokes. Homyakov, that vehement lay theologian, had brought along his latest paper on the nature of Orthodoxy, written in French, for which there was only a small audience, but there was a large circle ready to listen to Constantine read aloud a fresh page from his old father's genial memoirs.

Turgenev found this pastime more to his taste than the footless debates about Russia's destiny and the hidden virtues of her peasants, with Constantine and Homyakov. The young Aksakov was as fanatical on the subject as when in the first flush of nationalist zeal he had tucked his trousers inside his high boots and put on a blouse with its collar fastened on the side, peasant-fashion. How could you argue with a man to whom the people of the West were no better than Houyhnhnms? Nor had Homyakov changed since the time, ten years earlier, when the ladies who had assisted at the nocturnal bouts in the salons of Moscow had admired the toss of his blue-black mane and the force of his dialectics. He was more certain than ever that the Orthodox Church was the only true embodiment of Christianity, while to Turgenev the whole question of the respective merits of the Eastern and Western churches was like the controversy over the eating of non-existent gryphon as viewed by Voltaire's "Zadig." He outraged both men by declaring that his own

entire religion was comprised in Belinsky's famous letter to Gogol, which advocated not faith but reason, not nationalism but humanism, not Eastern Orthodoxy but Western civilization. The faith of the masses was bound to be a sealed book to him, for in Russia the connection between the church and the humanities was not nearly so intimate as in the West.

Constantine's revenge was to dub Turgenev's attitude toward life gastronomic. The guest had the grace to say to the old lady: "I promise you that at least next Sunday I will go to church. You, for one, don't despair of me as your son does." But if his remark was calculated to flatter the good soul, it did not deceive the rest of her family. Hot upon the visit, Vera made this entry in her diary:

> I decidedly disliked Turgenev. . . . He has no notion of faith. He has lived immorally, and so his ideas are sullied by his life. Besides, he is only capable of experiencing physical sensations. All his impressions pass through his nerves, he is not capable of either understanding or feeling the spiritual side of things. . . . He lacks even pagan force and loftiness of soul. All he has is spiritual and physical flabbiness, in spite of his huge stature.

Indeed, the vague Christianity of his university years had almost completely evaporated. It left behind that private interest in the supernatural and those odd superstitions which men without faith somehow manage to preserve. He had, in addition, the enthusiasm for strength of character common to weak-willed people, just as anemic clerks and flabby brokers make a hero of the perfectly fit baseball player. This admiration was one of the chief elements in the soil that nourished his work. Certainly his response did not stop short of spiritual matters. With him, as with so many artists, the intense perception of the physical world alone was so transcendent an experience as to unlock the gates of the spirit.

The contacts which he made at this time were seldom with such exacting people as the Aksakovs. He now counted among his acquaintances virtually all the writers of note. His house was, in his own words, neutral ground. Thither Count Sologub brought "his dragging legs, a finger stuck in his vest, and his tongue stuck in his

Upper Row: Turgenev, Sologub, Tolstoy
Lower Row: Nekrasov, Grigorovich, Panayev
About 1858

cheek"; the double-chinned Goncharov came with his deceptive phlegm; Botkin, the perfect connoisseur of Spanish bull-fights, English literature, and French cooking; Ostrovsky, looking more like a comfortable Moscow merchant than the playwright he was; the æsthete and critic, Druzhinin; the giddy Grigorovich. Here also came a young aristocrat, Count Leo Tolstoy, the only member of the "Contemporary" circle in uniform, having lately seen service in the Crimea, a man who in addition to his successes with cards and women, had already scored a literary triumph.

Turgenev had never looked the dandy more than now, and his towering figure with the large gray head was conspicuous in the drawing-rooms. He was as good as ever at making the ladies laugh, reciting the verses of his friend Foeth, mimicking, punning. But if he wore his buffoonery like a flower in the buttonhole of his dark-green velvet jacket, there were times when he chewed on his melancholy as on the stem of an old pipe. The half-dozen stories that he had written since the completion of "A Sportsman's Sketches" betray, in passing, a sad resignation to the dreary business of living and aging, and suggest a theme he was later to amplify, concerning love as an irrational force which enslaves whom it does not destroy.

Whether or not his failure to achieve a new manner was the cause, he was again despondent about his literary career. Always readier to believe those who censured rather than those who praised his work, he took pleasure in commending the critics who flayed him. He felt that the time had come for him to "alight" from Pegasus; at least he said so. His pet word "enough" was beginning to be often on his lips, but it was spoken less with the accent of the wise Epicurean than with the drawl of fatigue. It was in these low days that he wrote to one of his young literary protégés, whose works have been blessed with oblivion: "My activity, it seems to me, is already finished. But I shall consider myself happy if I succeed in being midwife to your writings." In the summer of 1855 he wrote "Rudin."

The novel was composed in six or seven weeks, at Spasskoye. Having set "Finis" to the manuscript on July 24, Turgenev, at the instance of his critical friends, spent the rest of the year revising

and rewriting it. He took the piece more seriously than anything he had done up to that time. In the course of revision the story underwent profound mutations: the hero became a villain and the villain resolved himself into a man with human greatness and human failings. The difficulty with the completed portrait is that the two strains are not really reconciled. The protagonist, Rudin, is a man of moral fervor who, being unable to take root in any work, contents himself with rhetoric; a man aptly described by another person in the novel as having genius but not character. "A Man of Genius" was the author's first title for the book. The main plot follows Turgenev's familiar pattern of a strong, loyal, high-spirited girl who is left broken-hearted by a man whose will is too spineless to sustain their common ideal. But before the book comes to an end Turgenev makes a series of efforts to rehabilitate Rudin by showing that after all he was faithful to generous ideas, that his golden eloquence, however flamboyant, could infect others with a fine eagerness, and that his weakness was as piteous as it was blameworthy.

That Turgenev was not satisfied with the result may be seen from the fact that after the lapse of ten years he thought it well to add a short epilogue, in which he has his hero die quixotically on the barricades in an alley of the Faubourg St. Antoine in the last days of the revolution of 1848. It is as though the novelist who started out to stone his own German period, in the end saw the value of sheer enthusiasm and softened toward the vaporizing ghost he had evoked. His tolerance was apt to weaken his sword-arm. Besides, there was enough of himself in the hero of his first novel to make him gentle with the man's shortcomings. There is a belief, which was encouraged by the author, that in drawing Rudin he was thinking of Bakunin. But, as Herzen put it, it is more likely that "Turgenev, affected by the Biblical example, created Rudin in his own image."

Turgenev was writing his first novel to the steady tolling of funeral bells and the wailing of peasant women over their dead. Cholera was now ravaging the countryside in and about Spasskoye, as it was also depleting the ranks of the troops in the Crimea. Since he had suffered an attack of this disease in Paris six years previously, he had had a morbid fear of it. For years afterward he fretted about his stomach, complaining about gastritis, stomach-fever, and

even cancer of the pylorus,—he named one of Diana's pups for this euphonious part of his anatomy. Whenever he had indigestion he took to his bed and declared himself lost. It was perhaps natural that he did not allow his work to be disturbed by the agitating news from the front, for, after all, Sebastopol was hundreds of miles away. But that he went on covering the paper with his comely sloping script while the danger of cholera was at his very door testifies to genuine self-possession and a rare capacity for working under difficult circumstances.

To judge by his writings, the war did not engage his interest deeply. He must have savored his friend Tyutchev's pun: *"C'est la guerre des crétins contre les gredins."* The news of the fall of Sebastapol elicited the comment: "If only we could profit by this terrible lesson, as the Prussians did by the Jena defeat! But no; we are n't even allowed to write about it." Like most thinking Russians, he probably felt that the war showed up the rottenness of the bureaucratic system. It is less probable that he realized the far-reaching consequences of the Crimean disaster. It was to usher in the period of reforms which gave the final blow to the tottering structure of patriarchal Russia and to the serf-owning gentry whose exodus was long overdue. Turgenev, setting down in the pages of "Rudin" his recollections of a vanished period of his own youth, was ensconcing and illumining certain aspects of Russian life which were even then disappearing forever.

CHAPTER XVII

"THE ONLY WOMAN"

T is a pity that you are absorbed in a feeling for a single person." Thus Turgenev to a young literary protégé who was about to marry for love. There was something to be said in favor of an unhappy marriage, but the cramping emotional routine of a successful union was fatal to the artist. One should approach every woman as a potential mistress: variety, not satisfaction, is what talent feeds upon. For himself, he found he could work best when the page was warmed by the glow of a casual affair, more especially with a married woman, "who can manage both herself and her passion." He could not understand this young man's curious predilection for a mere girl. As the years went by he was to regret that he had not married, but he seems to have retained the belief that any permanent relation with a woman was harmful to an artist. In 1874 he was writing to a friend: "I know the subject intimately and have studied it thoroughly. If I have n't touched it so far in my literary ventures, it is because I have always avoided themes which are too subjective,—they embarrass me."

That Turgenev was not always ready to pursue the game that sniffed at his traps is plain from such an incident as his affair with Katherine Ladyzhensky. The lady belonged to the eligible category of married women—indeed, was the mother of four children. Moved by a more than ordinary interest in literature, she started a correspondence with the author of "A Sportsman's Sketches." The

fact that she kept secret her epistolary adventure proved, even before she confessed the intention, that she had vaguely hoped to *"faire un peu de roman."* At first Turgenev was complaisant, and spoke with absent-minded gallantry of her "beautiful hands,"—the feature he was most sensitive to in women he admired,—forgetting that he had never seen them. She managed to arrange a meeting at the house of a common friend, but to her further advances he turned a cold shoulder, a circumstance which she attributed to his laziness.

There may have been another reason for his backwardness. Just then his interest was centered otherwhere. He had a distant cousin named Olga, a girl exactly half his age, with whom he was preoccupied, the gossips said, to the point of an actual proposal. She was a demure creature, and a diligent if not an accomplished musician. In May, 1854, when upon his first visit to the Aksakovs he was scandalizing them with his worldliness, he delighted the old man by a filial confession of his matrimonial hopes. The genial old huntsman consulted the cards as to the outcome. Three months later Turgenev wrote him that his plans had fallen into the water "as the cards predicted."

The facts of the case are uncertain. It is believed that his suit was accepted, but that in the end he refused his happiness, leaving Olga in a wretched state. At all events, in July, 1855, having received a letter from her, he was writing to Annenkov: "Lately I 've again been thinking a good deal of O. A. [Olga Alexandrovna]. Say what you may, she 's a charming creature." Shortly afterward he sought divertisement in the company of a pretty little Pole, whose favors he rewarded with such gifts as a silver service. But he remained solicitous that Olga Alexandrovna should amend his defection, and remarked to a friend that "it would be a pity if this beautiful soul were doomed to suffer the oxidation of old-maidenhood." Two years after the unfortunate event Olga had recovered her balance and her good habits, so that Leo Tolstoy held her up to his then fiancée, a frivolous fair, as a model. Olga's aunt had told him that the young woman rose at seven in the morning, played the piano until two in the afternoon, and spent her evenings over some book. The following year she consoled Turgenev, and presumably herself, by taking a husband.

In retreating from an entangling alliance, Turgenev was behaving like so many of his own heroes, young men unable to be the same in their own act and valor as they were in desire, and so failing at the critical moment to accept the responsibilities of action. For himself he could find at least two ways of rationalizing his natural evasiveness. There was in the first place the artist's fear of domestic interference with his main business in life: the fear he had expressed as a warning to his young confrère some years earlier. There was, besides, the excuse of an anterior passion whose tenacity even he had not fully measured. To the maternal if astigmatic eye of a middle-aged lady who was fond of him, this attachment appeared to be no more than a ghost, a memory, which must dissolve at the touch of a real affection. Turgenev's life was to prove the strange vitality of this ghost, to prove also "the pity" and the frail comfort of his absorption in a feeling for a single person—Pauline Viardot.

By midsummer of 1856 he was again on his way abroad. He did not go to study: his student years were over. He did not go for his health: he was enjoying a temporary respite from illness, both real and imagined. He did not go, like Dostoyevsky, to escape his creditors: he had none. He did not go, like Tolstoy, to break with his fiancée: he appears to have done that two years previously. He did not go for the sake of his novels, since his material and the leisure in which to shape it were both to be had in abundance at home. He went, then, for the same reason that he had gone nine years ago: to be close to Pauline. It is hard to account for this apparently sudden impulse. For the last two or three years she seemed to have absented herself from his life. Whether the gap in their correspondence from 1853 to 1857 was created by an estrangement or by a later concealment or loss of the letters, it is certain that already during his exile their friendship was cooling. When she was singing in Petersburg during the season of 1853 she did n't trouble to visit the involuntary recluse at Spasskoye, and lost her last chance of seeing him against the background of his home. At the same time he was receiving laconic notes from her in which he found "every word striving to be the last."

He could offer no reason for his going now but that the thing

was stronger than he: it was his fate, the fate that he himself stigmatized as the alias of a flabby irresponsibility. He went against the advice of his friends, as well as his own good judgment. Had n't he been bruised enough? asked Nekrasov. And how would he feel when the time for parting came, as it must? Countess Lambert, from the vantage-point of her femininity and her middle age, and with the frankness of a green friendship, apostrophized the nightingale of Paris, and begged her to keep to the skies, or the stage, but at all events not to descend to lunch with the novelist. Turgenev felt that the countess was almost right; he half agreed with Nekrasov as to how the visit must end; besides, he believed that the train that carried this aging creature out of Russia was cutting him off from his last chance of a normal family life.

He was to admit to Countess Lambert, with belated wisdom, that he was knocking his head against a stone wall. But when he set out there must have been a small, vague hope tucked away in his luggage. The wall had had a chink in it once. Pauline was as secret as Thisbe, and Turgenev silent as the slain Pyramus, yet every one believed what no one could prove. On an autumn day of 1862, after having dined with Ivan at the Viardots' in their Baden villa, his brother Nicholas was to sit down to pen a letter to his wife. Two days earlier he had written her that Ivan had told him in confidence such secrets as are revealed only to a brother, and that she would hear them on his return home. If these confidences finally came to the ears of Ivan's sister-in-law, they seem to have gone no farther, and all that we know of them is that then, as always, Ivan preserved a discreet silence about Pauline. His brother, like his biographer, is reduced to conjecture. "The Viardot children," Nicholas writes to his wife, "treat him [Turgenev] like a father (although they don't resemble him in the slightest degree; don't let 's gossip) ; in other words, I think that there were relations between them, but many years ago, and that now he simply lives with them and has become a friend of the family."

It was as a friend of the family that, toward the end of the summer of 1856, Turgenev greeted once more the familiar scenes of Courtavenel. There was the moat he had drained, the library he had arranged; there was his little pupil, Louise, who was now

a girl of fifteen, and her adopted sister, Pauline Turgenev, who in these half-dozen years had grown actually into a *jeune fille,* and—thank Heaven!—forgotten every word of her Russian. There was Louis Viardot, at fifty-six, no more middle-aged than Turgenev felt himself to be at thirty-eight. There was Mme. Viardot herself, the idol of the opera-house, with her one-shouldered shrug, her lovely hands, her enormous eyes. She was as she had always been, the good wife, the kind mother, the affectionate friend, above all, the adorable singer. The voice which, as her friend Saint-Saens noted, made of light pieces the badinage of giants and gave a superhuman grandeur to tragedy, her true medium, was now at its best. Her features had not changed; only, perhaps, she closed her wide lips a little more firmly, her eyes lighted less with her one-sided smile. Nothing had altered very much. Nothing was quite the same.

Turgenev had not been here very long before he had a visitor, in the person of his friend Foeth, then a lieutenant in His Majesty's Uhlans. He had omitted, with characteristic absent-mindedness, to warn his hosts of the arrival of this new-comer from Russia, so that the guest was received with some confusion. Foeth, already exhibiting the appetite which instructed his cook to make apple-cakes worthy of Alexander III's fork, went empty on the fare offered by the château. The bouillon was "weak to the point of unconsciousness." It was followed by a small meat-patty such as is served with the soup in Russia. The third course, the unkindest cut of all, consisted of daintily arranged and transparently thin slices of boiled ham, garnished with string-beans, and the dessert was a jelly omelette. The worst of the visit was that the lieutenant came away feeling that Mme. Viardot requited his friend's affections as ill as his own prandial hopes.

Not that Foeth's memoirs cast any light upon the nature of the relation between Turgenev and Pauline Viardot. In fact, he spoke of it in the vaguest terms, and many years later, in the opaque garrulousness of old age. A single moment stands out—the moment when Turgenev, striding hugely up and down the room, with his hands clasped above his head, and in the shrill squeak that betrayed him when he was excited, confided: "She eclipsed all the others long ago. Forever. I deserve what I am getting. I 'm only happy

when a woman puts her heel on my neck and presses my nose into the dirt." He clapped his mouth shut on the thoughts that followed, only to break out, bewildered and bewildering, "My God! What happiness for a woman to be ugly!"

Certainly, he was n't maltreated all the time; or, if this was what made for his happiness, perhaps he was. "Each day," he wrote retrospectively to a friend, "seemed a present." However unreasonably, he felt that he had come to port, and knew the taste of contentment. He had formed an attachment for this place, which was now the setting for homely entertainments of sorts. There were books to be read aloud. There must have been walks and drives. The "Potato Theater" rang to the lines of Racine and Molière. This remodeled guard-room owed its name to the fact that the entrance fee was a potato, which every member of the audience had to find for himself in the kitchen-garden and deposit in a crate which stood beside the door. Turgenev's daughter was charming in "Iphigénie." Louise, playing Athalie, was privileged to wear a scarlet robe cut by her grandfather Garcia, decorated with fringe and spangles by her grandmother Garcia, and originally worn by her aunt, la Malibran. Turgenev, too, was sometimes impressed into the caste. In her recently published memoirs, Louise (Mme. Héritte-Viardot) recalls how they would go boating of an evening and sing on the water a chorus that Gounod had composed in the morning. She retails at length the practical jokes the children played on Turgenev, in which her mother also sometimes took part.

There was surely music: after the lean years, Turgenev could not be surfeited, though he was the guest of a prima donna. They played all of Beethoven—indeed, almost everything except Wagner, who was the *bête noire* of the whole company. When, a few years later, all Paris hissed the première of "Tannhäuser," Turgenev, so he asserted, took a key out of his pocket and contributed to the general hooting. In time, Mme. Viardot accepted an invitation to sing excerpts from this very opera and she gradually became reconciled to the new music. Turgenev granted that there might be beauty in it, but it was so different from everything he loved that it was too hard a wrench for him to bring himself to like it. He found

"Rheingold" intolerable and "Meistersinger" atrocious, and dubbed their author a "eunuch-Priapus." Not that he was more receptive to other innovators in his favorite art. He had a low opinion of Russian music, making an exception of Chaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. Liberal in all other respects, he remained a complete conservative in music, reserving his devotion for such masters as Mozart, Gluck, Beethoven, and Schumann.

As for his own little job, Turgenev was keeping in practice, here at Courtavenel, even with parlor games. When they played *jeux de têtes,* and he drew the profiles to which the company attached characteristics, he retained the sketches and some of the commentary to use for his stories. In short, he was as happy, he wrote, "as trout in a clear stream when the sun beats down upon it and suffuses the waters." Breathing this mild autumn air, he could feel, about his sentimental life, with the poet whom he quoted: "The last flowers are dearer than the luxurious firstlings of the fields."

But this Indian summer of serenity came to an end when he left Courtavenel, following the Viardots to Paris. The height of his hopes might be measured by the depth of his disappointment when his worst anticipations were justified. Tolstoy, after meeting him, wrote home that Turgenev was "pitiful to see." He added: "I could never have believed that he was capable of such love." The trouble was that Mme. Viardot could n't give this middle-aged lover what he required. It was cold comfort to be forever sitting on the edge of another man's nest, even if the edge was broad and well cushioned. Turgenev had left Russia with the feeling that he had resigned his last chance of establishing a home there. Now his notion of the untrammeled artist seemed more than ever a youthful aberration. And yet what hope had he of creating a home with the woman who played Naomi to his Ruth? Writing to Tolstoy on January 3, 1857, he spoke of how some people, Mme. Viardot among them, disliked his story, "Faust," and added: "By the way, what are the absurd rumors that are spreading among you? Her husband is well, never was better, and I am as far from a wedding as you, for example. But I love her more than ever, and more than anybody in the world. This is true." Two months later he was writing to Annenkov:

Mme. Viardot made me a present of a bronze bear who lies on his back and scratches his belly. This bear is doubly dear to me, first, because it was given me by the only woman whom I love and always shall love, and secondly, because by a strange trick of chance, it is the spit and image of you.

While Turgenev was writing thus, Mme. Viardot was with child. It was not her husband who stood between them. She did not love her husband,—that serious, unchild-like man who was twenty years her senior. She wrote to Julius Rietz, the German conductor who enjoyed her violent friendship for three or four years:

I could never give Louis any other feeling [except friendship] in return for his strong and deep love, in spite of myself. . . . I will confess to you very quietly, in your ear, that these little trips which I made alone this winter [1859] were a very refreshing holiday for me. On the one hand, they were a rest for my heart, somewhat weary of the expression of a love which it cannot share. On the other hand, absence only strengthened my friendship, esteem, and respect for this man, so noble and so devoted.

Her art did not release her from the moral conventions which so many who followed the same calling lightly dismissed. She had character as well as genius. In his "History of the French Revolution," Michelet, after describing the *Fête de la Raison* of 1793, at which the actress, Mlle. Maillard, impersonated Reason, observes: "The day when the world, grown wise, will restore to women the priestly office which they held in antiquity, who will be surprised to see, marching at the head of the national procession, the good, the charitable, the saintly Garcia-Viardot?"

The prima donna had been born into a Bohemian way of life. As she matured, she reacted against her environment, and developed a taste for respectability which she was to carry with her to her grave. The only thing she claims to have inherited from her gipsy father was the vagabond spirit. Perhaps because of this, an air of transiency hung about her Paris home, so that after dining with the Viardots in January, 1856, Dickens wrote that their house looked "exactly as if they had moved into it last week and were going away next. Notwithstanding which, they have lived in it eight years." Aside from this gipsy habit, Mme. Viardot confessed herself puz-

zled as to how she could have been fathered by Don Manoel, a man who believed in neither God nor devil, and whose whole religion was love and art. Nor was she like her mother, who, as she remarked, "united a great deal of Catholic superstition to a total lack of religion." For herself, Mme. Viardot, while unable to formulate her faith, believed in the immortality of the soul and in the union of all lovers after death. This was the credo not of a sensuous but of a sentimental person. It would seem that the woman's emotional heat was either drained off by the prima donna's requirements, or transposed into a key which would not disturb her work..

She preferred to give up all thought of love, which could but destroy her home, wound her self-esteem, and intrude upon a career which she cherished with the egotism of the artist. How far she went to preserve her composure may be seen from the fact that the day after the coup d'état of Napoleon III she received only women, for the reason, she explained, that women's fears and guesses were so silly that one never believed them, while men, being more reasonable, might disturb her with their apprehensions.

In her correspondence with Rietz she makes an obscure reference to a moment of weakness when she was on the verge of committing some grave error, but her friend Ary Scheffer, the painter, stopped her, brought her home, "half mad," and helped her to get the control over herself which she seems never again to have lost. It may have been of this dark incident she was thinking when she wrote to Rietz: "Love kills when it may not flame up. To put it out, ah, that is a terrible agony, it is painful, frightful, deadly." Running away from love, she took refuge in friendship. She made a cult of this "passionate and yet tranquil" relation, exalting it, fondling it, praising it, lavishing upon it all the fervor of her polyglot vocabulary, treating it as though it were a frail and precious child. And it was indeed a child, the child of her fear. She wrote to Rietz:

> Without sacred friendship I would have died long ago. Through it alone I was resurrected like Lazarus; without it I could n't live. It is my salvation, the warming ray of my existence. . . . I can give as much friendship, constant, sacrificing, unselfish, firm, tireless friendship, as any human being can give. . . .

It was this safe sort of affection that she offered to the men who loved her—to Ary Scheffer, who was her lifelong devotee; to Berlioz, who at the age of fifty-six surprised her with a sudden passion; to Turgenev.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SLOUGH OF DESPOND

RAY as his mood was, it became even gloomier when, on reaching Paris Turgenev was suddenly beset by his old illness. It is telling only a half-truth to describe it as "bladder trouble." It was not, as his mother had feared eighteen years ago, the disease that had been fatal to his father. It meant hideous depression and severe neuralgic pain, but it was dangerous only to his pursuit of pleasure.

Faced with genuine trouble, the hypochondriac sank into a slough of despond. His friends were accustomed to his periodic despairs. But in the letters which they now received from "a dead man" there was a convincing accent. He was no better than a heap of dust that the housemaid had forgotten to sweep up. He was poisoned. He rotted like a frozen fish in a thaw. He was squashed like one of those white mushrooms with green filling that you are always treading upon in the woods in Russia. He was a wretched shed, propped up with beams, ready to fall to pieces. He was as brittle as glass. Old age was knocking at his door. Oh, he smelled of the corpse. With this snake gnawing at his vitals, how could he be interested in living? how could he be good for anything?

The scene of these miseries, the Paris of the little Napoleon,

was more than ever distasteful to him. Like so many other European cities in the fifties, it was booming with a spectacular prosperity. All din and dazzle, it could appeal, he thought, only to the callow youth or the doting ancient. His reading afforded him various escapes from the Parisian scene, into Hannibal's Carthage, Imperial Rome, the opium-eater's den. He liked the last place so well that he read De Quincey's "Confessions" twice, while dipping casually into Suetonius, Sallust, Tacitus, and Livy. He told the old Aksakov that he was living like a hermit, but it was solitude amidst multitude, for in spite of his ailing state, he met everybody. The author of "A Sportsman's Sketches" even had a brief encounter with the author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "a kindly, plain, and—imagine!—bashful lady, with her two red-headed daughters in red burnouses and fierce crinolines; very odd figures." As for the French literati, —and those whom he knew were legion,—he found the younger men stale, flat, and unprofitable, with provincial notions, substituting mannerisms for talent and log-rolling for criticism, and with not an æsthetic conviction among the lot of them. He detested the tremolo of Hugo; "the sickly whining" of Lamartine; the chatter of his deposed goddess, the garrulous old Sand; the cold obscenity of Mérimée; and as for Balzac, his vaunted realism was no more than a busyness with irrelevant trivialities—he summed him up later as "an ethnographer, not an artist." Altogether French art was degenerating. The French were getting the writing they deserved, for they were a narrow-minded immoral lot, having one passion only: money.

His dislike of his foreign surroundings went hand in hand with homesickness. Everything Russian became precious to him, and he hinted broadly that if it had not been for certain peculiar circumstances beyond his control, he would immediately have flown home, "where life is still young and rich in hope." When he wrote in this strain to his friend Aksakov, he was undoubtedly expressing sentiments which warmed the cockles of that nationalist's old heart. Yet there is no reason to question Turgenev's sincerity. It was simply that for a little while he too succumbed to the fascination of the nationalist faith in a Russia whose virgin vigor contrasted so strikingly with the senility of the effete West. He was nibbling

delicately at the worm which his friends Herzen and Bakunin had swallowed whole. He lost all interest in the bait when a brief respite from his illness allowed him five weeks in England.

He went to visit the small colony of London exiles of whom Herzen was the chief. And as Turgenev got there in May, at the height of the season, he was able to use to good advantage his letters of introduction. He made many "pleasant acquaintances." He met Disraeli, perhaps rather in his capacity of novelist than of statesman. He found Carlyle interesting, in spite of his undemocratic views. He also encountered Macaulay, and Thackeray, who, upon being regaled with a Russian folk-song, laughed till his large paunch quivered. He just missed an encounter with Palmerston, and if he had not been in such haste to go to the continent for a water-cure, he might have spoken with the Prince Consort himself. Before crossing the channel again, he went to Manchester, where he saw "many marvelous things." Altogether, the English were an agreeable surprise to him: "truly, a great nation."

But this trip was merely an island of satisfaction in a sea of discomfort. What further contributed to his trouble was the fact that his collected tales in three volumes, which appeared toward the close of 1856, met with a cool reception. His reaction to these accumulated ills was to decide that he was unfit to hold a pen. His talent had run dry. His prose was as bad as his verse had been, and all he could in decency do was to retire. The young Tolstoy, who was also in Paris, holding his tongue and bulging his eyes, was the only hope of Russian literature.

"As for me," Turgenev wrote to Botkin, "let me whisper in your ear, with the request not to repeat it to any one: 'I shall not publish, or for that matter, write a single line to the end of time.' " He had then written only the first of his six large novels, and none of the more famous short pieces. "The other day," he continued, "for fear of imitating Gogol, I did n't burn, but tore up and threw into the water-closet all my rough drafts, plans, etc." He felt that he had sufficient command of his native tongue to work as a translator. If he kept well enough, he would, he decided, try his hand at turning "Don Quixote" into Russian (M. Viardot had translated it into French). "Perhaps you will think that all this is exaggeration,"

Turgenev concluded, "and you won't believe my words. You will find, I trust, that I never spoke more earnestly and sincerely." Ten days later he was mailing the second part of "A Trip to Polesye" to Annenkov, with the request to transmit the manuscript to an editor.

His wanderings ended again at Courtavenel. The family had meanwhile been increased by the arrival of a new baby. Paul Louis Joachim was born while Turgenev was on his travels, and he had responded to the news with a letter containing kisses and congratulations for them all, and requesting a detailed description of the revolutionary day which the little sans-culotte had chosen for his entrance into the world, also information as to the color of his eyes and the witticisms he had made. "And the little one's cries—is there," he asked the prima donna, "any music sweeter than that?" It was from Courtavenel that Turgenev wrote to Nekrasov in September, 1857, inviting him to his Petersburg apartment a month hence, to help eat a turkey with rice which he himself undertook to carve. However, the noble fowl escaped the knife, inasmuch as the following month found the novelist in Rome.

The notion of Rome had come to him from Botkin the exquisite. Surprising as the suggestion at first seemed to him, he was soon seeing himself there in his dreams. There was again the thought of escaping his present wretchedness by a change of scene. Rome, which he had once tasted with an unblunted palate, would, he feebly hoped, renew for him, if "for the last time, the sense of youth and beauty." If there was any stuff left in him at all, Rome, out of its accumulated humanity, would grant him the mood for work. He did not, like Henry James, fear the distractions of Italy, whose cities draw the artist, as the American novelist found, "away from his small question to their own greater ones." No, a winter in Rome would cure him of his melancholy; would stimulate him with "great traces of a great life"; would give him solitude without loneliness; would, in fine, assure him of "that peculiar tranquillity, full of inner attention and quiet movement," which, as he had written to Countess Lambert, is essential to a writer, to an artist generally.

Turgenev had also hoped that the Southern climate would benefit his health. He was deceived. The demon of disease was not to be exorcised by all Rome's magic. There were still recurrent notes of

despair in his letters. He was ruined, like an ant-hill poked about by ruthless children. Or, melancholy rather than bitter, he would remark that the beauty he perceived on every hand was something that an ailing, aging man could watch but not partake of. Illness, which is interesting to youth and natural to old age, was especially noxious, he felt, in the middle years. A black pall had fallen upon him and wrapped him round.

And yet he was not so wretched as to be completely idle. In fact, he was able to finish one long "short story," and the sense of accomplishment made him feel, as he put it, like another Orion safe ashore. This tale was "Asya," one of his better-known short narratives. He concludes an epistolary plaint to Annenkov by saying, "Still, I try not to let the soot pass into what I do." And indeed, his wretched humor is not allowed to appear in his writings except in the anodyne form of wistful sadness. That is the undertone that fills the pauses of the narrative, both in the case of "Asya" and in the earlier piece, written under the same stress, "A Trip to Polesye." The latter, bearing the personal note of "A Sportsman's Sketches," is marked by elegaic digressions. Alone in the thick of the virgin forest, and struck by the familiar panic wrought by nature's inhumanity, Turgenev views, for one heartbreaking minute, his whole past life, and sees it reduced to no more than a poor handful of dusty ashes. Again, watching a sun-drenched dragon-fly poised on the tip of a twig, he seizes on it as a symbol of that equilibrium of vitality which is the core of life,—that equilibrium, to lose which is to be doomed. When one does lose it, surely one should meet one's fate with the instinctive stoicism of brutes and simple men. In "Asya" the moody interjections are less emphatic. Here he pities the folly of youth which expects daily bread in the shape of gilded cakes, and reflects on the faint breath of a withered flower that outlasts the joys and sorrows of the man who pressed it, and indeed outlasts the man himself.

The background of "Asya" is a small Rhineland town such as the author had known in his own young days, and in the foreground move two men and a girl who, unlike in all other respects, are alike in sharing youth's limitless and objectless expectancy. Every element of the story is typical, even to its origin. He was moved to

write it by a glimpse of a decrepit cottage with two women leaning from its windows. Typical, too, are his characters: the well-intentioned, ineffectual young men; the girl, shy, ardent, all of a piece. Typical, the chaste blossoming of passion, and the lovers' abrupt parting. Here, as in so much else of his work, the indefatigable hunter is tracking down no less a quarry than youth itself. A man confirmed by illness in his sense of middle age, he invests this earlier period of life with the enchantment lent by distance. What he offers is just the bloom of the fruit, an essence all compact of warmth and fragrance, something at once impalpable and authentic, like a melody.

It was fitting that "Asya" should have been written in Rome. This city, which, to a man nourished on the classics, was full of togaed ghosts quarreling in the Forum, bargaining at the baths, at once saddened and soothed him with its vast, historic pageantry. Whatever else the Roman ruins did to him, they did n't add to his depression. The place, he found, affected him like music, something in minor, perhaps, but none the less cordial and benign. It could, he wrote later, replace, in a measure, everything—society, happiness, —even love. It was not the Rome he had seen in his student years, nor was he any longer the young blood who had evoked the shade of Cæsar with a saucy shout. And his companion was not the heavenly Stankevich, but that elderly connoisseur of art and life, the gourmet, the dandy, the dilettante, the sybarite, Turgenev's "Don Basilio," Vasily Botkin. Botkin, who knew his Cellini as Stankevich had known his Hegel; who used to teach his friends to find as much transcendental pleasure in sniffing the aroma of turkey stuffed with truffles as in listening to Schubert's songs; who could be outraged almost to the point of violence by an unfashionable waistcoat; who, finding himself remiss in the history of India, could begin to study it at the age of fifty-two; who could deeply admire the way Turgenev painted his radicals, and thank God for the government that suppressed them.

It was not upon Botkin alone that Turgenev relied for company. There was also a small and select colony of his compatriots, most of them belonging to the nobility, with whom he occasionally tea-ed and dined. They were pleasant enough people, but the inquisitive

Grand-Duchess Yelena Pavlovna was somewhat tiresome; at the end of every one of her sentences he found, he said, a corkscrew. And here, as in Petersburg, his orbit crossed at once the *haut monde* and the confraternity of artists. At the Café Greco, on Via Condotti near Piazza di Spagna, which had been offering entertainment for two hundred years, he passed the time of day with some of the Russian painters and sculptors who had come to Rome to study and to work. Here he stood up against the young iconoclasts, for the Italian masters of the Rennaissance, and especially for Raphael.

The most conspicuous person in this group of artists, the one who most attracted Turgenev, was Alexander Ivanov. After more than a quarter of a century of work here, this painter had become quite a Roman, and something of a local celebrity. He was known for having spent more than twenty years over a single canvas, which although not yet completed, he was exhibiting to a select public. He worked steadily at the same theme—Christ appearing to the people. He was harried by the baffled desire to paint, with the utmost historical accuracy in details, his changing conception of the Saviour. His chief difficulty was that he had lost his faith and embraced the unorthodox views of David Strauss. He went so far as to visit Strauss, with whom he held unique converse, himself speaking Italian, which Strauss did not understand, while the theologian spoke Latin, of which the painter was quite innocent. No one will ever know what the German thought of this squat, elderly Russian, with the broad white forehead and soft cheeks of a child, the awed eyes of a hermit, and plump stubby-fingered hands.

What Turgenev relished in this earnest soul was the combination of a boundless naïveté with flashes of searching intelligence. Then too, he admired the man's work for the intellectual quality which informed it, and which compensated him for its technical shortcomings. Already he felt that a work of art at its best involved the artist's rational powers to the full, and that without understanding there is no æsthetic appreciation. Besides, he sympathized with Ivanov's passion for observation, which is evidenced in all of the two hundred and fifty-eight sketches for his main canvas. He saw a great deal of the painter, and, together with Botkin, took him on a short trip to Albano. Turgenev's account of the excursion affords

a glimpse of the trio as they halted, in the golden light of the fine autumn day, at Rocca di Papa: he, melted by the felicity of the hour, and all attentive; Botkin, feeding his senses on the weather and the ancient stones; Ivanov, squatting on the brink of a well, and biting at a piece of dry bread which he had taken out of his pocket and which he was dipping now and again into the water.

All through the winter in Rome Turgenev neglected the doctors, but by March (1858) he was on his way to Vienna to consult one of its celebrated physicians. He was leaving Rome with voluble regret, but in all his subsequent peregrinations he never returned to it. He stopped off in Florence and spent there ten days which he remembered to the end of his life. He also visited Venice, and several pages of "On the Eve" bear witness to the fascination of the city. Looking back on that time after the lapse of a quarter of a century, he thought that he had then been "very young." Not that he had then felt so. "It is useless," he wrote in "On the Eve," "for a man whose life is over, who has been broken by fate, to visit Venice: it will be bitter to him, like the memory of the unfulfilled dreams of his young days." He must have tasted something of that bitterness. In Vienna he declared that he was going home to stay there to the end of his days. Dr. Sigmund finding some trouble with that part of his system which had been intermittently affected since his Berlin days, the patient concluded that he was to spend the rest of his life in that pathetic effort to postpone the inevitable end which is the whole occupation of old age. "How soon," he lamented, "the candle has guttered out!" The candle was to burn another twenty-five years, and give sufficient light for the writing of his five major novels and any number of shorter pieces.

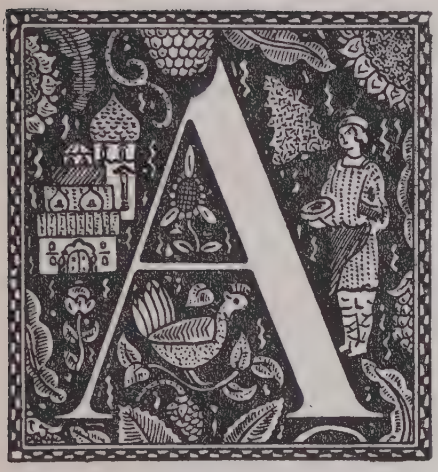
Before our weary Ulysses smelled the smoke of home fires in June, he had touched at several other ports. He went to Dresden simply to see Annenkov, who was surprised to find, instead of a moribund creature, a man in flourishing health. To account for his condition, Turgenev advanced the theory that a person seriously ill shows every sign of health during the periods of respite: the disease allows nature to fatten its victim, so that, returning, it may find food for a feast. In this state of grace Turgenev traveled once more to London, and thence to Paris. The trip to the French capital had

been planned months previously. He was to be groomsman for Prince Orlov. It was apparently his fate, he had written to Foeth from Rome, always to be groomsman and never to have any of his own. He expected, as he wrote to Nekrasov, to spend no more than a fortnight in Paris. "Having read the word 'Paris,' " he continued, "you will think: 'He 's a liar; he 'll stay there.' To this I reply: a certain person will not be in Paris then, and I shall go only to see my daughter." In April he was writing to the same correspondent, "If I am alive, I shall be in Petersburg by the end of May. No power on earth will keep me here any longer," concluding with a quotation:

"Enough! Away with you!
You 've given Folly all that is her due."

CHAPTER XIX

SAVORED MELANCHOLY



DINNER at Donon's celebrated Turgenev's home-coming. The air of the June evening resounded with the noise of droshkies clattering through the courtyard to the door of the old, aristocratic restaurant. Champagne flowed. The mercurial Nekrasov was there. And Goncharov, screening his jealousy behind a retiring manner. And Ivanov, freshly come to this confusing, unfamiliar, hard-headed Petersburg, and more dazed than ever. It was good to be back again in this genial atmosphere.

Turgenev had digested no more than half a dozen less elaborate dinners before he found himself back at Spasskoye. He spent four diligent months at home, and when the winter season revived the life of the capital he went back to his Petersburg friends, carrying with him the manuscript of "A House of Gentlefolk." This piece of writing bears the impress of the author's surrender to middle age—resignation without stoicism, bitterness without anger. The story of Lavretzky's tragically disappointed love for Liza is steeped in the mournful pigments of the author's mood. For a few incomparable hours Lavretzky believes that he can mend, with Liza's help, the life broken by a worthless woman. He has scarcely realized the freedom granted him by the supposed death of his faithless wife, when she turns up again like a bad penny to rob him a second time of the incredible happiness that he had for a brief moment accepted as possible.

All the minor characters and subsidiary situations are skilfully made to assist in indicating the secret inception and delicate progress of the love of Lavretzky and Liza. Their meeting in the garden is a piece of writing which gives out fragrance like a wind-shaken bush. Such a passage makes up for the gossamery quality of the heroine. For Liza, the Russian Gretchen, is less a flesh-and-blood woman than a symbol of unattainable happiness and irrecoverable youth. In the end she takes the veil, that she may atone by prayer, presumably for the sin of loving a married man, and she begs Lavretzky to reconcile himself with his wife, thus performing his duty as she does hers.

The final glimpse we catch of Lavretzky is when he returns, after an absence of eight years, to the garden "where for the last time he had vainly stretched out his hands toward the forbidden cup in which the golden wine of delight bubbles and sparkles." And yet, Turgenev insists, the "lonely, hearthless wanderer" was content; he had undergone that saving change which alone gives men strength to endure: "he had really ceased to think of his own happiness." He had become a capable gentleman farmer and had provided well for his peasants. Having anchored in the harbor of middle age, he regarded the new craft that was taking the wave with sadness but no envy. It is as though Turgenev had cast Lavretzky in the part for which he was himself the understudy.

In the character of the old musician Lemm, the novelist indirectly pays homage to the romantic Germany of his youth, to its idealism, its earnest sentimentality, its genius for that art toward which all the others move. France, on the other hand, or, more properly, Paris, is treated with implied disparagement as a depraved, pleasure-loving, cold-hearted belle. It is in the malicious portrait of Lavretzky's wife and the faint sketch of her French maid that all Turgenev's distaste for the country in which he was eventually to make his home is most vividly felt. The novel presents also a vulgar version of the Westernist point of view. Panshin, whom the author patently detests, in an argument with Lavretzky declares that the trouble with Russia is that it is only half Europeanized, and that it will be cured of its troubles only when it becomes wholly so. All the nations, he glibly announces, are exactly alike: give them good

institutions, and the rest will take care of itself. There is an unmistakable flavor of Slavophilism in the arguments which Lavretzky uses to confound the little bounder. He stands up for the cultural independence of Russia; he insists upon the impossibility of sudden transitions and unjustified "arrogant reforms"; he demands that the worth indwelling in the common folk of the country should be acknowledged and reverenced.

Turgenev may have been philandering with notions which were normally uncongenial to the temper of his mind. He always felt that cosmopolitanism meant sterility. But that made him no less of a Westernist. Certainly, as long as the subject was capable of exciting him, he cordially disliked Slavophilism, which meant to him nothing but musty churchliness, Pharisaical self-sufficiency, blind dogmatism. It affected him, as he himself put it, "as a bad smell or a bad taste." That he could put a distorted expression of his own convictions into the mouth of the odious Panshin, and make the lovable Lavretzky uphold ideas which he could not share, argues that objectivity which he believed to be an essential of the artist's equipment. He said as much in his Preface to "Fathers and Children," in which he accounts for this apparent defection from Westernism by declaring that he was obeying the logic of his characters rather than his private preconceptions.

"A House of Gentlefolk," published in the January issue of "The Contemporary" for 1859, definitely established its author as a novelist of the first rank. It was destined to be the only one of his novels which everybody read and which opposing camps praised with equal fervor. According to Annenkov, it inaugurated a literary "truce of God." The reviewers devoted interminable pages to it in the bulky magazines, and it was a grateful topic at dinner-tables and in drawing-rooms. Titled hostesses strove manfully with one another for the privilege of entertaining the writer. Bold and awkward young men in the first flush of authorship placed their manuscripts in his hands as upon the knees of the gods. There were at least three elements in the book which made for its immense success. People felt that here the place and the times were represented in illuminating terms. Besides, there was the charm of the lyricism in which the story is bathed: the aura that radiates from a passing

epoch as from a setting sun. And the spectacle of an intellectual turning his face from the West and coming home like a prodigal son to cultivate his acre, was bound to win rounds of applause.

The winter was one of busy if not especially zestful living: dinners at Donon's and Dussot's; the establishment of a fund for needy men of letters; some slight semi-political controversy; an affair, rather too arduous for a man turned forty, with a person of the demi-monde. He spent a good many more quiet evenings on Furstadtskaya Street in the delightful drawing-room of Countess Lambert. It was connections of this rank that won him the reputation of a snob. During this season the malicious Goncharov wrote Botkin that their friend was perpetually calling on countesses and princesses: "If he does n't pay three visits in an evening, he is downcast." But even if Turgenev had originally sought the Countess Lambert because he hoped that a lady, who was the daughter of a Minister of Finance and who had been presented at Court, might be of service to a writer under police surveillance, certainly their acquaintance ripened into a friendship to whose genuineness his letters richly attest. She was neither young nor beautiful, but cultivated, charming, and intelligent, and maintained one of the leading salons in Petersburg. He was grateful to her for offering him one of those serene and secure relations which suited the autumn of his days. Here was a sympathetic ear for his little monologues on life, and his recitations of Pushkin's incomparable verse, a lap into which to pour his troubles, another pair of critical eyes to review his manuscripts.

There were moments, indeed, when this comfortable companionship was threatened by the invasion of a disturbing element. "If I were your husband," Turgenev wrote to his friend in October, 1859, "and my wife were in the habit of writing such letters [as I am receiving from you] I would be rather worried." He wrote to her fondly too,—she said he had the soul of a siren,—and probably talked to her in the same vein as he bent over her hand; but in his letters at least, he was never unfaithful to Pauline. "I consider it my duty to tell you that there are only two creatures on earth whom I love more than you: one, because she is my daughter, the other, because . . . you know why." The friendship begun so tardily for

both of them endured for a dozen years, and then lapsed painlessly.

In March, 1859, he was snowed in at Spasskoye, with his plans for "On The Eve," his memories, and his dogs. Chief among his four-legged companions was the old Diana's daughter, Boubout, so christened by Mme. Viardot, who had known her in her puppy days at Courtavenel. This creature came about midway in the canine dynasty that began with Napol, a dappled coffee-colored animal of French parentage, and ended with Pegasus, in whose veins were mingled the blood of an English setter and a German sheep-dog. Boubout was particularly favored, with a mattress in Turgenev's own room, where she slept under a quilt; if the quilt fell off during the night she would give him a nudge with her paw, and he would rise to cover her up again. It was for her that he took the *Journal des Débats*. She liked the paper. After a day's hunting she found it soothing and soporific. It was the only sheet large enough to cover her completely and protect her from the flies when she wanted a doze. On his return to Spasskoye this time he found a new meditative gravity in her eye which led him to suspect her of having dug into German philosophy during his recent absence. Himself, he had long since lost interest in that sort of thing.

He was still in the country for Passion Week, and at Easter he attended the midnight mass at the little village church, which smelled heavily of sheepskins, wax, and incense. His shoulders ached with the weight of his fur coat, and his heart with the savored melancholy of remembering a boy's Easter nights. "Life is poured out to the last drop," he wrote Botkin of that moment, "but the fragrance of the just-emptied vessel is stronger than when it was full. *Addio, vita!*"

With the first breath of spring Turgenev was again leaving Russia. After a short visit to Herzen in London, he suffered a month's course of treatment at Vichy. The man took his ailing body around to doctors as he sent his manuscripts to his friends, with an unacknowledged faith in the essential soundness of both. Midsummer found him at Courtavenel. The wild pigeons cooed in the garden. The children were always hurrying out of doors or calling one another through the corridors. The wheels of the household ran smoothly in their accustomed grooves. The whole scene was almost

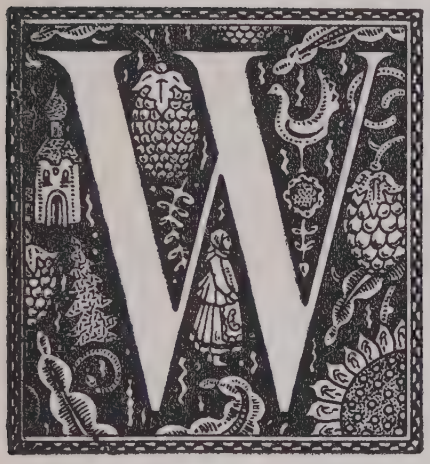
as, a year ago, he had left it, basking in the serenity of Indian summer. But the waters of the moat had dried up. Were the springs of his passion drying up as well? He was certainly under no further illusions as to what Mme. Viardot desired their relation to be. She had her own interests, her own home, her own life, to which he could contribute only as a friend. She wrote to Rietz in July:

> Turgenev, the friend I told you about recently, is still with us; he belongs to the few whom I call friends. . . . We read a great deal together—that is, habitually. We began Homer only yesterday. . . . I know nothing pleasanter than to read aloud a good fine book with a sympathetic spirit, a dear friend.

For the first time he was acquiescent. He looked at his happiness as he looked at his youth, across an unbridgeable divide. Yet his attachment remained. It was an affection which had sufficient vitality to change, and so to endure. What had died in him, as he explained to Countess Lambert, was not really his feeling, but the hope of its being reciprocated.

CHAPTER XX

HAMLET AND DON QUIXOTE



HILE taking the waters at Vichy, in the summer of 1859, Turgenev began the actual writing of "On the Eve." The Italians were then engaged in fighting the war of liberation, in which Garibaldi was to play a leading rôle. On the day of the battle of Solferino (June 24, 1859) Turgenev was penning one of his frequent letters to his confidante, Countess Lambert:

If I were younger, I would give up all work, and go to Italy, to breathe this now doubly blessed air. So there is still enthusiasm on earth! So people can still sacrifice themselves, can rejoice, can be beside themselves with ecstasy! If I could at least see how they do it! But I have already grown too sluggish, and I 'm too lazy to leave my accustomed rut. . . . All the fire that 's left in me has passed into my literary faculty. Everything else is cold and quiescent.

He said the same thing in a letter to Annenkov, adding that it was just as well for a "born spectator" like himself to keep away, because if he were in Italy he might do something foolish.

He had done the preliminary work on his new novel in the spring. A note-book had been filled with brief biographies of his characters. He went so far as to keep a diary for one of them (Shubin), as he told an American visitor many years later. Unfortunately, the manuscript of this diary, no part of which he included in his tale, and which exceeded in bulk the novel itself, was destroyed

about a dozen years after the book came out. The germ of the story had been planted in his mind in 1855. A friend living on a neighboring estate, about to set off for the Crimean front, had handed him a manuscript containing the history of his love-affair with a Russian girl who at first reciprocated his affection, but later preferred a Bulgarian with whom she left Russia for his own country, where he soon died.

Turgenev's absorption in his work was complete. He dreamt of his characters. Their lives were his life, so utterly that he could n't give his interest to anything in which they had no part. The creatures of his imagination at once stimulated and sucked his energies. He was too deep in his work to speak of it freely to his friends, and yet he could think of nothing else. In midsummer, 1859, he was sitting in his room at Courtavenel, congratulating himself upon the freedom he had found there to go on with his novel. He had fled thither from Paris, after a month at Vichy, from where he had written to Annenkov, "Everything French stinks in my nostrils." The French capital had been doubly abominable with hundreds of trains bringing crowds to witness the spectacle of Napoleon III reviewing his Italian troops in the borrowed style of imperial Rome. Turgenev wound up his letter from Courtavenel:

Every military festival is a horror to me, and this one especially. There will be bayonets, uniforms, shouts, arrogant sergeants-de-ville, adjutants dripping sweat. It will be hot, close, and smelly—*connu, connu!* It 's better to sit before the open window and look at the motionless garden, slowly mixing figments of the imagination with memories of distant friends and distant Russia. It is fresh and quiet in the room. The children's voices ring through the hall. The sounds of Gluck float down from upstairs. What more would you have?

These moods of serenity which always recurred at Courtavenel were a foil for the melancholy that seized him as soon as he left the place.

That autumn his melancholy weighed on him with peculiar heaviness. He felt more than ever a man without a home; and, besides, he was haunted by a sense of the futility of existence and the nearness of an oblivion for which death was too small a name. With this went "a turning to God," for the first time in perhaps a dozen

years. And for the last time, too. His brief and vague resort to religious consolation was, as he confessed to Countess Lambert, "the final flare of the lamp." In his subsequent letters to his devout friend he repeatedly concedes that he is not one of the faithful, an admission which he makes with a humble if not a contrite heart. "Why do you think that Polinka [Pauline Turgenev] does n't go to church?" he asks in 1862. "Not only did I not 'rob her of her God,' but I go to church with her myself. I would n't commit such an attempt on her freedom, and if I 'm not a Christian, that 's my personal affair, perhaps my personal misfortune."

The writing that he was doing at this time was another source of distress: as usual he was uncertain of its quality. In the heat of battle, he told the Countess Lambert, he could n't guess whether he was moving toward victory or defeat. After he had returned to Spasskoye, and was depressed by a cold that he took there, he said that he was like a man in a quarry, striking away for all he was worth, yet seeing nothing but dust. The piece was finished by the end of October and copied in a note-book on the first page of which Pauline Viardot had inscribed in French the wish: "May I bring you luck!" Then more than ordinary misgivings assailed him. For one thing, he recognized that the plot was faulty. Perhaps his friends would encourage him with a favorable verdict. But Countess Lambert, to whom he had promised to dedicate it, declared that the book was false from beginning to end. He went home and looked from his contemned pages to the fire snapping in the stove. Then he sat down at his desk and wrote a note. Annenkov, as so often, was to be his court of final appeal. The good man hastened to Turgenev's apartment, where, as he had been forewarned, he found the fire going. But he also found, very shortly, that Turgenev had summoned him in the secret hope that he would restrain the vandal hand. Annenkov had little difficulty in pointing out to the author the merits of his work and saving it from the flames.

The countess was too hard on the novel, yet it does suffer from fundamental defects. The author's avowed purpose was to indicate "the necessity for *consciously* heroic characters"—tough-minded men, capable of devoting themselves wholly to a cause at once generous and practical. Sitting, not quite at ease, in his fauteuil, Tur-

genev watched the social drama with an attentiveness which allowed him to divine its course. He was sensible then, that the type he purposed to show, the idealistic man of action, was in the making in Russia, but had not yet emerged. Not finding any such man among his compatriots, he took for his protagonist a Bulgarian, against the usual Russian background. This Insarov remains, however, a lay figure, draped in the heroic, if to-day scarcely modish, garments of insurgent nationalism. Turgenev is unable to interest the reader in the destiny of this excellent and wooden creature. Besides, the story revolves less about Insarov's activities in the service of his oppressed people than about his love-affair with a Russian girl, Yelena Stahov. As a critic of the day observed, the only part of Insarov's Odyssey that the novelist actually chronicles is the visit to Calypso's Isle. When the moment for action approaches, Turgenev kills him off.

True, for contemporary readers, the novel's center of gravity lay nearer to Yelena than to her lover. She is one of those poised, passionate virgins whom he never tired of drawing; the complete person, capable of making a brave choice and holding to it, welcoming danger, loneliness, and hardships as incidental to the great purpose to which she pledges herself when she accepts her lover. Although Yelena deserts her country, this inert Russia that breeds only frivolous Shubins and inconsequential Bersenyevs, the liberal part of the Russian public saw in her a symptom of hope for themselves. They felt that the mere existence of such a person between the covers of a book suggested a fermentation, a rising sap, the stir of young life, impatient of old evils and schooling itself to rectify them. The girl was the better able to impress the audience because Turgenev managed to endow her with the vitality that he failed to give her Bulgarian.

The secondary characters, with the exception of Shubin, who is almost the Philistine's picture of an artist, are drawn with Turgenev's accustomed skill in handling his familiars. It is with a half-friendly malice that he touches off Yelena's parents and that vast gluttonous sphinx of a man, Uvar Ivanovich. The complacent pettiness of their lives, as well as the helpless uneasiness of the two young men who are Insarov's rivals, set off the strenuous ideal to which Yelena and Insarov cling. It was Russia's tragedy, Tur-

genev seems to have felt, that she bred no fit mate for such a woman.

"There is no one, as yet, among us; there are no men, look where you will," runs a passage from one of Shubin's speeches. He goes on to say that there are none but dark, earthy minds, triflers, or little Hamlets, consuming their own vitals. Shakspere's distracted hero furnished Turgenev with a fundamental term in his classification of character. About the time when his horizon was filled with "On the Eve," he was elaborating his concept of the Hamletic type by contrasting it with its extreme opposite, in a paper which belongs with the most solid and stimulating essays in the Russian language. Mankind, he contends here, can be divided into the Hamlets and the Don Quixotes, although in the fewest the type comes pure. The knight of la Mancha embodies faith in, and selfless devotion to, an ideal. He is the man of action, whose blind single-mindedness may make him ludicrous, and often makes him great. The prince of Denmark is the skeptic, spoiled for action by too much thought, and wryly cherishing his own ego, for want of anything better to cherish. The one is the complete enthusiast, the other the complete ironist. Don Quixote is belabored by the shepherds; Hamlet flagellates himself. Turgenev sympathizes with the Dane's tragedy, but, himself too much the Hamlet, gives his admiration to the comical, noble knight errant. Don Quixote, idealizing Dulcinea, refuses to believe his eyes when she appears to him in the guise of a slattern. "We ourselves have seen such people, and when their like shall cease to exist, let the book of history be closed forever: there will be nothing in it to read." True, he fights windmills, but who knows exactly where reality ceases and fantasy begins? "It seems to me, therefore, that the principal thing in life is the sincerity and strength of our convictions; the result lies in the hands of Fate. It alone can show us whether we have been contending with ghosts or with real enemies, and with what armor we covered our heads. Our business is to arm ourselves and fight." When Don Quixote comes to die, he lays aside all his pride, declaring that as in the old days he is now simply Alonzo Quixano the Good, and Turgenev comments: "All things shall pass away, everything shall vanish—the highest rank, power, all-embracing genius, everything shall crumble to dust, but good

deeds shall not vanish as smoke: they are more enduring than the most resplendent beauty. 'Everything shall pass,' the Apostle says; 'love alone shall endure.' " In many of his works, he indicates the respect and affection he bore the type to which he was a stranger.

"On the Eve" failed of the unanimous applause accorded its predecessor. The liberals welcomed the book with reserve, while the conservatives were shocked and disgusted by the way in which Turgenev condoned the conduct of his wilful young heroine. This aspect of the novel deprived him of many admirers, and on quite another score it cost him a friend, whom he had met through Belinsky, years back, and who had since become famous as the author of "Oblomov"—Goncharov. The two had been rather intimate, reading their manuscripts to each other, and confiding to each other their literary plans. At Goncharov's instance, Turgenev omitted from "A House of Gentlefolk" a conversation between Liza and her old aunt which resembled a scene in a projected work of the older novelist's. Turgenev was lacking in the professional jealousy by which Goncharov's entire career was poisoned. With more than his usual solicitude, he urged his friend on, wishing that he himself were a pretty woman, so that he might more effectively prod his laggard confrère.

When "A House of Gentlefolk" appeared simultaneously with "Oblomov," and scored a far greater success, Goncharov was miserable. He had always considered this Turgenev a literary trifler, capable of turning out agreeable sketches, but certainly not one to sustain the herculean effort entailed by a novel. He was particularly envious of his rival's facility. The world of his own fancy, Goncharov explained on one occasion, would unroll before him like a broad expanse of land—field and forest, town and village—glimpsed from a mountaintop, and it was a slow, laborious process to come down from the height, to note the details of scenes and characters, to enter into each separate life, and to recombine all into a chosen pattern. Turgenev's imagination worked rapidly with simpler elements. It seized upon an individual, or a group of individuals, and invited them to act in a self-revealing manner.

When the irritated Goncharov tried to put Turgenev in his place by writing him that, whatever his talents, he was incapable of truly

plumbing character, or of constructing a sound fable, the latter replied:

I can't go on scribbling "Sportsman's Sketches" ad infinitum, and I do not want to give up writing. So all that 's left for me to do is to compose narratives in which, without laying claim to unity or strength of characterization, or deep penetration into life, I can express what pops into my head. Who looks for a novel in the epic sense of the word, need n't come to me. I no more think of the construction of my novels than I do of walking on my head: no matter what I write, it will always be a series of sketches. *È sempre bene.* . . . However, enough of this. All this fuss leads nowhere. We shall all die, and stink after we are dead.

In his reply Goncharov reiterated that while his friend was only scratching life's surface, he himself, serving art like "a yoked ox," was plowing a deep furrow. Turgenev accepted these remarks with the consenting silence of one inclined to agree with his critic. Nor was he surprised to find Goncharov at the dinner given him before he again left for western Europe in April, 1859, and to receive his God-speed. Privately, the author of "Oblomov" was telling himself that the spoiled darling would no sooner cross the frontier than he would dismiss from his mind all his friends at home, to greet, with the same faithlessly jovial countenance, his friends abroad. At least, so Goncharov wrote plainly to Annenkov.

When, nine months later, "On the Eve" appeared, Goncharov was plunged into fresh torments. Again he wrote a letter of sullen insinuation to Turgenev, making the covert suggestion that this prolific rival had plagiarized his own novel, "The Precipice," fragments of which he had read to Turgenev, after their friendly custom, from the manuscript. Again Turgenev was too kind or too lazy to engage in controversy. But one day Goncharov, meeting a mutual acquaintance, and hearing that the man was dining with the author of "On the Eve," said with the energy of intense hatred: "You tell Turgenev that he 's giving dinners on my money." The reference was to the four thousand rubles which the novelist had received for his book. Turgenev was indeed told, and shortly demanded satisfaction, with the alternative of having the case arbitrated by a committee of literary men. The arbitration took place

in March, 1860. Turgenev was completely exonerated, the judges declaring that any likeness which might exist between the published and the unpublished novel was due to the fact that the two authors were rooted in the same soil.

Turgenev left the room swearing that he would have nothing further to do with Goncharov, but he buried the hatchet four years later when they met at the grave of a friend. Yet while his resentment was fading,—he was too temperate for a sustained enmity,—Goncharov's morbid jealousy was growing steadily stronger, until it took the unmistakable form of a persecution complex, with Turgenev in the rôle of his arch-enemy. Fifteen years after the arbitration took place, he composed a circumstantial memoir, setting down for posterity the history of their relations. These pages, which were only published in 1924 by the Leningrad Public Library, make Turgenev the villain of a piece staged in a madman's mind.

In 1855, we learn, Goncharov confided to Turgenev in great detail the plan of his novel "The Precipice," at which he had been working for six years and which did not appear until thirteen years later. "He listened without stirring," writes Goncharov, "holding his breath, with his ears nearly glued to my lips, as he sat near me on a small divan in the corner of the study." Out of the information then imparted to him, Turgenev had carved "A House of Gentlefolk," "Fathers and Children," "On the Eve," and "Smoke." What he could n't use himself, he turned over to foreigners, and that was how *Germinie Lacerteux, Das Landhaus am Rhein, Madame Bovary,* and *L'Education Sentimentale* came to be written. Having thus robbed his friend, the conscienceless wretch organized an immense conspiracy designed to keep him informed of whatever Goncharov wrote or planned or uttered, with a view to interfering with the latter's work at every turn. The unhappy victim could never be sure that during his absence from home, his manuscripts were not being copied by one of Turgenev's thousand agents; moreover, his conversations were reported verbatim, and his letters regularly perlustrated. Indeed, it was to these very letters that Turgenev's minor works owed their existence. Turgenev was living abroad, first, in order to conceal his literary impotence from

his compatriots, and then, in order to be able to dispose of the stolen goods, as well as to see that nothing by Goncharov should be translated into a Western language.

The document is one to interest psychiatrists, and the literary critic may well give thought to the paradox whereby Goncharov's diseased mind was the matrix of the sanest novels in the history of Russian literature, not excepting Turgenev's.

CHAPTER XXI

FREEDOM

HE other day," Turgenev wrote from his wintry Paris to Countess Lambert, "my heart died." The letter bears the date December 10, 1860. "You understand what I want to say. The past dropped completely away from me, but having separated from it, I realized that nothing is left me, that my whole life dropped away with it." The reference is obviously to an unexplained crisis in his relations with Pauline Viardot. "It was painful," the letter continues, "but I soon turned to stone. And now I feel that thus I can still go on living. But should the least hope ever again spring up in me, I would be shaken to the roots of my being. This is not the first time that I have known the ice of numbness under which grief silently hides. Let the crust thicken, and grief must die." Indeed, already during the previous summer he had watched "a sad mist" envelop his connection with Mme. Viardot. "In the old days," he had then written to another friend, "how my heart beat, how obstructed my breathing was, when I approached it [Courtavenel], and now it has all quieted down—and it 's high time. I intend to spend some ten days here—no more. (These two words speaks of new times.)" Now he felt as though the tie had "not so much broken as melted away." He had the sense of being a contemporary of Sosostris, who had by some miracle re-

mained among the living, and kept an impersonal love for the good and the beautiful. "If a man knows that he 's dead," he continued, with a flippancy hardly to be relished by his correspondent, Countess Lambert, "that 's a sure proof of the immortality of the soul."

The tie was not broken. He remained attached to Pauline and to all that was Pauline's until he died in the rural retreat he shared with her and her family. For better or worse he came to accept, like her other devotees, the rôle of a friend. The strength of his feeling for her must have led him to exalt her ideas, so that he came to find a charm in the notion of a platonic friendship, for all his periodic excursions into more carnal and less permanent liaisons. On the other hand, the very vehemence with which she was wont to protest her amity must have stirred at odd moments the hope, that had seemed altogether quenched, of a closer bond.

At this moment he believed that it was not Pauline Viardot who kept him from going home, but her namesake, his daughter. He had been forced to take her away from the Viardots when she was fifteen because she was unable to get on with them. He established her in a Paris apartment with an elderly English governess, saw to it that she took music lessons with the prima donna, and did all he could to make an attractive *jeune fille* out of the plain-featured girl. He did this out of a sense of duty, rather than affection. "For me," he wrote, "she is, *entre nous,* another Insarov; I respect her, and that is little." She had turned out to be a shrewd, strong-minded, unimaginative, church-going person, exactly the opposite of her father, and with the makings of a good wife, mother, and housekeeper. She looked so typically Russian that her father's compatriots, strangers to her, instinctively addressed her in her mother-tongue, of which she did not understand a syllable. If only he could discharge his obligations by marrying her off to some decent fellow! He confided to Countess Lambert that there was little in common between him and his daughter: "She loves neither music nor poetry, nor nature, nor dogs,—and I love nothing else. That 's why it 's hard for me to live in France, where poetry is trifling and wretched, nature positively unbeautiful, the music makes you think of puns and vaudeville, and the hunting is abominable."

His dislike of France at this time was overpowering. The very

sounds of its "finical" language made him twitch. He begs Countess Lambert to write in Russian.

"You will see that although it does not have the boneless pliability of French, for the expression of many thoughts, and indeed the best thoughts, Russian is wonderfully fine, because of its honest simplicity, freedom, and strength. Strange—these qualities: honesty, simplicity, freedom, and strength, are not to be found in the people, but they are present in the language. . . . Consequently, they must some day appear in the people, too.

As was so usual with him, his distaste for the foreign scene served to sharpen his nostalgia for Russia, and vice versa. In November, 1860, he thanks Foeth for his letters, which carry with them the sounds and scents of autumn at home: the smell of plowed ground, when the air is touched with chill, the smoke that hangs about the grain-kiln, "the honest odor" of the steward's sheepskin, and the pleasant creaking of his boots in the hall. As the months of 1861 draw on, and Turgenev is still in Paris, he thinks wistfully of spring in the Spasskoye park, with the nightingales fluting amorously among the new leaves. The next year, in which he was to have only two months at home, he again complained to Foeth about his homesickness. He felt as though his soul had left him, to haunt his native ravines. By this time some of his friends had begun to suspect that he cared less for his soul than for his aging, ailing body, which relished the creature comforts afforded by western Europe. The novelist protested, and with reason, that the charge was groundless. Certainly a viveur would have avoided a place as hateful to him as Paris was to Turgenev.

What especially rankled in him was that he found himself staying on in the French capital while Russia shook from stem to stern with the great news of the emancipation of the serfs. By an irony of fate, even when the first definite step toward abolition had been taken by the Government, Turgenev had not been on deck. This was in the winter of 1857–58, while he was wistfully idling in Rome. If he had been at home during that season he, like the rest of the gentry, would have been invited by his emperor to help organ-

ize one of the committees on ways and means of effecting the great reform.

Here was something to rouse the most sluggish blood. Here was a topic to set agog the small colony of Russians gathered in the city of the Cæsars. Turgenev attended their meetings, and listened to the speeches with interest. He had things to say on his own account. He knew the gentry—a stupid, prejudiced, chicken-hearted lot. They were certain to put spokes in the wheels of progress. He believed in the force of public opinion. If only the landowners could be made to understand that the Government would do nothing to hurt them! If only the emperor could realize that there were gentlefolk who understood his intentions, and were ready to lend a hand! Perhaps if there were a new review devoted to just these questions, an organ which would speak to the gentry on behalf of abolition—a periodical that could be a clearing-house of information on all the problems connected with the reforms! Turgenev went as far as to draw up the plans for such a review, but his memorandum on the subject was the end of it. In those days he could not take his mind from the enigma of Russia. "Is this Leviathan," he was writing to Countess Lambert, "going to stir and take the waves? Or is it going to get stuck midway?"

While the terms of emancipation were being debated in the provincial committees, Turgenev proceeded to prepare against its coming by introducing a new régime on his own estates. The summer of 1858 he went home with the firm intention of making an arrangement with his peasants whereby he would till his land with hired labor only, his serfs paying him an annual quit-rent in money for the use of the acres portioned off to them for cultivation, and being free to dispose of their time as they chose. With the aid of his Uncle Nicholas, he largely succeeded in carrying out this innovation, which went far toward facilitating the readjustment necessitated by emancipation. It is the arrangement on which the liberal landowner Kirsanov in "Fathers and Children" prided himself. Turgenev expected to lose about a quarter of his income as a result, but he hoped that eventually hired labor would prove so advantageous as to make up for the loss; and, besides, he was glad to think that the

peasants were by themselves, and he was by himself; and he liked to feel that, although he had not legally freed his serfs, he was in fact a landowner, not an owner of "souls"!

On February 19, 1861, the emancipation manifesto was made public. Annenkov telegraphed the details to Turgenev in Paris. "God bless the Czar!" Turgenev wrote back. Even the most stiff-necked and suspicious of Alexander's subjects shared this emotion at that moment. Here was something to have lived for. If only he could have been at home! When Herzen reproached him for living abroad at this time, he replied: "Why turn the knife in the wound? What can I do if I have a daughter whom I must marry off and on whose account I must willy-nilly sit in Paris? All my thoughts, my whole being, is in Russia." He did n't care much about seeing how Moscow and Petersburg received the news; but if he could have stood for a bit in some local village church, unobserved and observing, while the peasants listened to their priest read the words that gave them freedom! There were phrases in the manifesto, however, that would, he was sure, make the serfs scratch their poor silly heads: the piece, which, as a matter of fact, was composed by the Metropolitan of Moscow, looked to him as though it had been originally written in French, and translated into Russian by some German. At any rate, there it was, and when he attended a thanksgiving service in the Russian church in Paris, his lashes were wet. He saw an old Decembrist in the congregation, and another Turgenev, an ancient émigré, stood in front of him, and wiped his eyes with the rest.

But one could n't just be emotional about it. One had to go home and settle things. It was n't a business to look forward to with pleasure. He had already had a taste of what it meant to deal with the peasants. You might come to terms with them about a quit-rent arrangement, but then you could whistle for your money. The work they did for you was sure to be botched. A landowner had best sell his timber-land before the peasants, what with vandalism and thievery, had left it bare. No decree could give them overnight the sense of civic responsibility, confidence, and fair play which centuries of slavery had crushed in them. Turgenev retailed the difficulties that must have been reported to him by his manager,

when he described in "Fathers and Children" the vexations of Nikolai Kirsanov.

His troubles with his hired laborers became unendurable. Some gave notice or demanded an increase, others left after they had received their earnest money; the horses sickened; the harness wore out as though it had been burnt; the work was done carelessly; the threshing-machine ordered from Moscow turned out to be worthless because of its weight; another was ruined the first time it was used. . . . The peasants who had been placed on a quit-rent basis failed to bring the money on time, and stole wood from the forest. . . . To crown it all, the peasants began to quarrel among themselves; brothers demanded separate shares, their wives could not get along together in one house. . . . It became necessary to examine the conflicting claims, to shout oneself hoarse, knowing in advance that no correct decision could be reached. There were not hands enough for the reaping: a neighboring peasant-proprietor, with the most dignified appearance, had contracted to furnish reapers at two rubles a desyatina, and had cheated in the most unconscionable manner; his own peasant women demanded unheard-of wages, and meanwhile the grain was dropping out of the ear onto the earth, and then, the mowing could not be managed, and meanwhile the Trustees' Council was threatening and demanding full payment of interest on its loan at once. . . .

In spite of his preliminary measures, Turgenev had trouble enough when it came to determining the size of the holdings, and the amount of the redemption payments for the land assigned to the peasants. To his own serfs—mostly illiterates, of course—he was not the author of a book which had worked for the granting of their freedom, but merely the helpless, kindly son of their stern old *barinya,* Varvara Petrovna,—the Kingdom of Heaven be hers!—an absentee landlord whom they could bully and fool to the top of their bent. They kept on hemming and hawing, refusing to put their mark on the paper that would obligate them definitely and bring the settlement to a conclusion. The law declared the person of the serf free, without compensation to his owner, but the land, including the peasant holdings, nominally remained the property of the gentry, so that the peasants had either to buy their strips, or pay a tax for the use of them. When the full meaning of this dawned on them,

they had a cheated feeling. They struggled darkly with the notion that the gentry, having lost their serfs, had no further right to the land. In temporising and delaying they were moved by the hope that a new and complete "freedom" was bound to come, and it was some time before they accepted the situation as inalterable.

Turgenev was one of the first to reach a settlement with his peasants. He ceded them one fifth of his land, and at Spasskoye presented them with the ground on which their houses stood, as a gift. He thought he was being generous "to the point of rascality." He had no illusions about the ungracious spirit in which his kindnesses were accepted. The muzhiks behaved as might be expected of freedmen, more conscious of their rights than of their obligations—a shrewd and anti-social lot. What was needed in dealing with them was patience and pedagogy. But if he was not surprised he could n't help, frequently, being disgusted. As often as not he looked with doubting eyes at the new order. Yet his faith in the promise held out by the reforms, though severely tried, was not defeated. He summed up his feeling about the situation when he wrote in his novel "Smoke": "The new was slow in taking root; the old had lost all strength. Incompetents jostled against knaves; life, shaken up, quivered like a quagmire, and only one great word—Freedom—moved, like the spirit of God, on the face of the waters."

Not seldom he found his former serfs troublesome neighbors. They remained obsequious enough, so that he wrote to his steward begging that when he came to Spasskoye they would not poison his existence by a continuous kowtowing. But at the same time he had to see their horses browsing freely over his flower beds. In spite of their attitude, he continued to consider them in a more or less paternal way, presenting the Spasskoye villagers with pieces of land, from time to time; and it is a matter of record that on one occasion he gave them a strip of woodland which they promptly sold, only to get drunk on the proceeds. His welfare work included the erection of a hospital, a home for the aged and a school. He had a chapel built near a village pot-house to get rid of the latter—the law providing that a public house could not stand within a given distance of a house of worship.

The emotional tone of his personal life was not raised by the

momentous reforms with which the sixties opened in Russia. These three or four years of hope could buoy up only momentarily an unhappily Laodicean spirit, heavy with self-distrust and a skepticism at war with his sentimentality. It was now that he quoted appreciatively Mme. Viardot's remark that he was *le plus triste des hommes.* He felt, as he confessed to Countess Lambert, that he was losing touch with the world: his inner tissues were still fairly soft, but on the periphery they were hardening into a shell. And this at a time when he was writing his great novel, the one which above all others showed him to be deeply and exquisitely in contact with the core of the life around him.

When he was not at his desk, he was balancing between the pleasures of a vegetable existence and a mood of what he called "indifferent dejection." It seemed to him that the days were melting away "imperceptibly as ice in the sun," or flowing on "like a rusty swamp river among reeds and grasses," or, again, were being clicked off quietly "like beads on an abacus"—a fact which he dismissed with his favorite phrase: *"È sempre bene."* There were occasional bright spots: a masquerade ball, a rout in Petersburg, amateur theatricals,—he had preserved the talent exhibited in the "Potato Theater,"—the novelty of delivering a public lecture, for the benefit of the Needy Authors' Fund. For the rest, there was the usual German water-cure, a little chess, and much music, the last during the long stays at Courtavenel and in Paris, and, too, there were seabaths at Ventnor. In the little museum there he came upon an object which he never forgot: the broken prow of a galley, covered with the rust of centuries, beneath which was decipherable the ship's name—*Giovane Speranza:* Young Hope.

Philandering was part of the routine. There was, for example, the erratic, shrewd, spendthrift Southerner, Marya Markovich, whom he described as a Sphinx continuously flashing riddles in the shape of incomprehensible telegrams. He wrote a preface to one of her volumes of tales; he escorted her on a few journeys; and he sent her melancholy letters in which he assured her gallantly of his devotion. He spoke of a strange feeling which made him wish to have her near him, and referred vaguely to certain things that had happened in his "small Paris room," where they had had long talks,

adding that he did not quite know what to make of it all, but had worked out an explanation not flattering to himself.

So often life presented itself to him as "substantially a disease," for which philosophy, science, ethics and art were nothing but anodynes. He was passing, as he wrote Foeth on July 16, 1861, through the "difficult twilight period of impulses all the stronger that they are not justified by anything, the period of quiet without rest, hopes that resemble regrets, regrets that resemble hopes." He liked this last phrase so well that he saved it for his next novel. "A little more patience," he went on, "and we shall land in the peaceful haven of old age, and there we shall find old men's activities and old men's joys. . . ." By his forty-fourth birthday he had almost persuaded himself that he had reached that haven. Virtually his whole life, he considered, lay behind him. And now truly he was without regret, as he was without hope. He felt himself to be in the grip of "immutable inhuman laws. . . . The small squeal of my consciousness," he pursued, "avails here as little as if I were childishly gabbling I, I, I, on the shore of an eternally moving ocean. The fly is still buzzing, but in a moment it will cease,—thirty or forty years is also a moment,—and another fly, only with a different nose, will begin to buzz. And so on, forever and ever."

CHAPTER XXII

THE NIHILISTS

N the Eve" marked for its author a decline of old associations. Unlike most of his previous work, it made its first appearance not in "The Contemporary," with which he had contracted in 1856 for the publication of all his future writings, but in "The Russian Herald," a rival review. Financial considerations probably had little to do with his defection, although his health, his travels, and his growing daughter all put a strain upon a purse of which he was no more careful than when he had depended upon an erratic mother's bounty. During the last few years, his influence if not his prestige with his friends on "The Contemporary" had been lapsing. The offices of the publication were in the house which Nekrasov shared with Panayev, as he shared the ownership and editorship of the review and also the favors of Panayev's wife. Here friends and contributors came to see Nekrasov at odd hours, often to discuss tea and literature with him as he lay late of a morning.

Turgenev had felt very much at home in this house, which was something of a literary inn, until lodging was found there for a young consumptive critic, one Dobrolubov, whom Nekrasov had discovered and whom Mme. Panayev at once took under her wing. It was some time before the established contributors became aware of the new-comer. It was hardly to be expected that when Tur-

genev did notice him, he should treat him as an equal. But this stiff-necked, unfeeling boy was indifferent to how he was treated! Mme. Panayev, who wasted no affection on Turgenev, takes pleasure in relating how the obscure young reviewer refused the great novelist's off-hand invitation to dinner along with a distinguished and eager company, and how the host lamented the lack of enthusiasm on the part of the younger generation. He recalled how he himself had hung breathlessly about for a mere glimpse of Pushkin, and how he had danced attendance even on Koltzov.

The young man distressed Turgenev in several ways. He had no patience with his senior's urbanity, he dismissed harshly the latter's diffuse humanitarianism, he was disgusted by his expansiveness and by his feminine softness. When an editorial dinner brought them together at the same table the novelist remarked to his neighbor that Dobrolubov's eye turned the soup cold and frosted the window-panes. Nevertheless, Turgenev sought the society of the unfriendly youth and plied him with talk, until Dobrolubov himself begged him to desist, announcing calmly: "Ivan Sergeich, you bore me." Dobrolubov was equally explicit to another new and like-minded member of the "Contemporary" staff, Chernyshevsky, to whom he said that he found Turgenev intolerable.

Both of these young Puritans saw literature as a means toward the end of political and social emancipation. Chernyshevsky had said something of the same sort in a dissertation on æsthetics the year that "Rudin" was published. The thesis of this materialist was that art is a substitute for life, as margarine is a substitute for butter, and that if life were beautiful, art would lose its raison d'être. Turgenev's first impulse was to call Chernyshevsky's dissertation worse than a bad book—a bad act. Later, he came to see that the acuteness of the man's understanding of the times in which they both lived made up for the bluntness of his literary taste. Yet Turgenev was naturally displeased to see the growing influence of this writer on the policy of the review with which he himself had been so intimately connected. Chernyshevsky's tact, dictated by the desire to hold a priceless contributor, could only postpone the inevitable break. It was not long before the men grouped around "The Contemporary" were divided into two hostile camps. On one

side of the fence were the older contributors, men, like Turgenev, of established reputation, genteel connections, exalted, liberal sentiments; on the other were Dobrolubov and Chernyshevsky, upstarts, meanly nurtured commoners, with democratic instincts, radical views, and a strong utilitarian bias.

Between the two groups were all the barriers of age, and temperament, and class. "Having been raised on lenten fare," Mme. Panayev credits Turgenev with saying, "these young men are envious of those more easily reared, and that is why they want to erase from the face of the earth poetry, the fine arts, all æsthetic pleasure. . . . They are literary Robespierres. The Frenchman did n't hesitate, did he, to guillotine Chénier?" Whether Turgenev actually said this or not, he was n't beyond applauding a friend's remark to the effect that Dobrolubov's set were a lot of lousy seminarists (both Dobrolubov and Chernyshevsky were sons of priests and had attended divinity school) in whose presence the lamps burned dimly, and who always left behind them a smell of linseed oil. Chernyshevsky's manner, he confessed, turned his stomach, and the characters the man invented simply stank. The senior group preferred to see the pen wielded by fingers that could manage a fork properly at a gentleman's table.

There were moments when Turgenev's friends naturally succumbed to the notion that they were the guardians of the nation's light, and at all hazards must prevent its being snatched away from them and quenched. In a letter written January 4, 1858, Tolstoy (the moralist not yet having pecked open his shell) asked Botkin:

> What would you say if now, when the filthy stream of politics is trying to swallow everything, and to soil, if not to do away with, art,—what would you say about the people who believe in art's independence and its immortality coming together, and demonstrating this truth both by deed (the practice of art) and word (criticism), and trying to save what is eternal and independent from the accidental, one-sided and all-pervasive political influence? Why should n't we be those people? That is, Turgenev, you, Foeth, I, and all those who share our opinions. . . . Our tool could be a review, a miscellany, what you please."

Fortunately for this review, it did not materialize, for it would have been dedicated to a lost cause.

"The Contemporary" did not long remain a house divided against itself. Nekrasov left things pretty much in the "seminarists'" hands and allowed the others to drop out. Of course he was anxious to retain so distinguished a contributor as Turgenev, and was very glad to publish in the January issue for 1860 his paper on Hamlet and Don Quixote, which had originally been delivered as a public lecture. At the same time, the novelist was being perpetually chilled and discomfited. Chernyshevsky was given "Asya" to review. Turgenev disliked his tone. Dobrolubov discussed at length "On the Eve," using the novel, in his wonted manner, as pretext for a discourse on the needs of the time. Turgenev, seeing the piece in proof, was so offended by the opening paragraphs, which vilified æsthetic criticism, that he demanded they be stricken out. The article appeared intact. Then came an anonymous review of a Russian translation of Hawthorne's "Wonder-Book" which contained a covert allusion to "Rudin" that Turgenev could not stomach. The implication was that he had caricatured a man of heroic caliber who happened to be penniless, in order to please his rich friends, to whom poverty was synonymous with roguery.

In October, 1860, Turgenev asked to have his name stricken from the list of regular contributors to the review. But Annenkov, who was the go-between, omitted to deliver the letter, in the hope, shared by the editors, that a peace would be patched up. In the meantime the quarrel became a matter of public knowledge, and in the June issue of 1861 Chernyshevsky published a statement that the separation was due to a difference in political and social views. Turgenev was outraged by the implicit suggestion that he had been dropped, when the truth was that he had been the one to withdraw, in spite of repeated requests and inducements to remain with the magazine. As a matter of fact, in January, 1861, Nekrasov had tried to enlist Annenkov's help in winning back the novelist, and when that failed, he wrote a pleading letter to his old stand-by. But this was one of the few occasions when Turgenev was not to be shaken. His name never appeared in "The Contemporary" again except as the object of a snub.

This "tempest in a glass of water," as he called his quarrel with "The Contemporary," had at least one serious consequence. It

injured his standing with the younger generation, for whom the great radical review (in 1861 it had all of six thousand eight hundred subscribers) was a beacon and a banner. And then there was his personal loss, the defection of his old friend, the editor. He had always disliked the man's civic poetry, with its dull didacticism. But up to now that had in no wise affected his attachment to Nekrasov. Nekrasov, whom his memories associated with Belinsky himself, Nekrasov, who had sponsored "A Sportsman's Sketches," Nekrasov, with whom he had had no reserves, even on the subject of Pauline Viardot. Well, that was done with. As late as April, 1861, Nekrasov commissioned Turgenev to buy him a rifle in Paris, and for a time the two men remained on speaking terms. But soon all contact ceased.

Turgenev had, generally speaking, a large tolerance for the moral lapses of those to whom he was attached by the bonds of habit or common work. For years he had overlooked Nekrasov's failings, and ignored, if he did not wholly discredit, the ugly stories that had circulated about him. But now that he himself was a victim of the editor's double-dealing, his forbearance gave out. The man was really as bad as his reputation. Turgenev told Herzen that he had broken with the editor of "The Contemporary" because he was dishonest. Herzen had broken with him years before for the same reason. His close friend Ogarev and that gentleman's first wife (whom Turgenev evocatively called "the bald-headed Bacchante") had been involved in a complicated lawsuit which ended in the loss of their fortune. Herzen, believing with so many others that Nekrasov had had his fingers in that pie, made no bones of calling him, in writing to Turgenev, a scoundrel, a card-sharper, and a thief. Nekrasov was only whitewashed, and that not entirely, in 1917, many years after all those concerned—including the chief culprit, Mme. Panayev, the mistress of the suspect—were in their graves.

Turgenev made peace with Nekrasov only when the latter was ready to descend into his, in 1877. A suggestion of what the meeting was like is caught in one of the nondescript brief sketches included in his "Poems in Prose." One sees the sick man, with his yellow skin and scant gray beard, his bare chest heaving, difficult

tears in his inflamed eyes, at the moment when he places his hand, lean as a picked bone, in the large well-kept hand of his horror-stricken visitor. To Turgenev it seemed as if there were a third presence in the room, a tall, quiet, wraith-like woman, with deep, pale, absent eyes and stern, pale, silent lips—Death. "That woman joined our hands. . . . She reconciled us forever." In the presence of "the fell sergeant" Turgenev was always ready to exchange forgiveness: how could he bear ill-will toward any man about to suffer the unanswerable insult of extinction?

Turgenev's rupture with "The Contemporary" naturally put an end to his traffic with Chernyshevsky and Dobrolubov. It would have been terminated shortly in any event, as the former was soon to pay for his radicalism by imprisonment and twenty years of exile, while the latter died in 1861 of the same disease that had carried off both Stankevich and Belinsky. Turgenev remembered both young men with anything but enmity. His interest in Dobrolubov had been partly an expression of his self-dissatisfaction. Here was one of those whole-hearted, rigorous, disciplined men, so enviably different from himself. Moreover, the novelist came to recognize in him the signs of an emerging type. Even his preferment of spectacles to eye-glasses and a sack-suit to a frock-coat came to be symbolic of the rebel order. This was that new man for whom he had been looking in "On the Eve." Alternately repelled and attracted by him as a personality, he studied him as a model, and, when he came to cast a hero of iron, found good use for the metal that was in him.

In his essay devoted to "On the Eve," Dobrolubov had remarked that the youth of the day was facing problems and cherishing ideals radically different from those which occupied the heroes of Turgenev's first two novels. Such a beautiful-souled idealist as Rudin, for example, was a superannuated figure. "It is clear that the kind of people we need now are not men who would raise us above our surroundings, but rather men who would raise our surroundings to the level of the rational demands of which we have become conscious." Turgenev could not fail to realize the justice of these observations. The complexion of the educated classes was obviously undergoing a change. "On the Eve" had, as a matter of fact, re-

flected the expectant temper of the years that came on the heels of the Crimean War. Great things happened in the decade that followed it (1856–66). The ten millions of serfs were freed. Trial by jury became a fact. There began to be something like representative local government. The universities received a measure of autonomy. Democratization of the army was initiated. Tongues were loosened, and minds released, if only temporarily, for the practical tasks of reconstruction.

Radical democrats like Chernyshevsky and the other leaders of the "Contemporary" group championed the peasant masses, denounced the bureaucracy for the manner in which it was carrying out the reforms, and awaited the coming of a vaguely conceived communism. To the right of this group was a set of gentlefolk who, for one reason or another, were nursing the notion of persuading the czar to grant a constitution on the English model. To the left, appearing on the scene about the middle of the decade, were the young idol-breakers who had no political ax to grind, but lifted their hands against all the wooden images of virtue around them.

These Nihilists (the term was to be raised from obscurity to a byword by Turgenev, who caught the type *in statu nascendi*) were intent upon freeing the individual from the restrictions imposed by outworn modes of thought and behavior. They took upon themselves the noisy, dusty, exhilarating job of house-wrecking. "What can be smashed," wrote one of them, "must be smashed. Whatever stands the blow, is good. What flies into smithereens, is rubbish. At any rate, hit out, right and left, there will be, and can be, no harm from it." Their fathers, in *their* youth, had sought truth and beauty, so as to attain harmony with a divinely ordered universe. These young men regarded truth with Pilate's eyes. They were suspicious of beauty. To them, the marbles and the canvases they were called on to admire smelled of the peasant sweat that had purchased these exquisite things. And what was the sense of beauty anyhow, but a matter of spinal irritation? As for the universe, they had nothing to say about it until, with the help of exact instruments, they could learn what it was really like. Like the French Encyclopedists before them, and the Bolsheviks after them, they used the brooms of a ferocious materialism and a

self-confident rationalism to clean out the Augean stables of tradition.

Nihilism was a characteristic if extreme expression of an awkward, earnest, bold, and dissident age; an adolescent age, traces of whose spirit are to be found even, perhaps especially, in post-revolutionary Russia. It was a time when children were taught to address their parents familiarly, and to "thou" them. Young people protested against the hypocrisies of social intercourse by affecting rudeness in company. Verses were written, but were considered a shameful weakness even by those who perpetrated them. Women gave recalcitrant males, whether fathers or husbands, what Sir James Barrie calls "the twelve-pound look," bobbed their hair, put on plain dresses, and went to study midwifery or stenography. Ill-assorted couples separated with unprecedented frequency (divorce being extremely difficult) and formed new ties without benefit of clergy but with a measure of social approval. Army officers retired from their wicked profession to open book-shops. Everything, down to the desirability of swaddling babies, became a problem to be debated in the public prints. People swore by Buechner as they used to swear by Hegel, and as they were destined to swear by Marx. All interest in the irrational elements of human nature was anathematized. The useful was declared to be the sole criterion of morality and the corner-stone of æsthetics.

Throwing overboard, as they did, all established values, the Nihilists used the gesture with especial zest when it came to the fine arts. Chernyshevsky and Dobrolubov granted that literature, for example, had its uses in an imperfect world. Art is justified in the measure to which it promotes the good life. The writer can create nothing to surpass reality, or, for that matter, to equal it, but if he is a keen middleman trading in the ideas which scientists and philosophers have produced, and if, above all, his fictions make society conscious of its deformities, and lead to their correction, he has done a creditable job.

The Nihilists went farther. Pisarev, their chief spokesman, looked forward with satisfaction to a day when the arts would be no more. He undertook an assault upon æsthetics as the Bolsheviks have undertaken an attack upon Heaven, proceeding with the same

lack of humor, and adhering, but with a more glaring obtuseness, to the same rational and naturalistic ideal. Pisarev could see some virtue in a painter: he might sketch a grasshopper to illustrate a manual on insect pests. But was there any man more useless than a musician? He expressed his pleasure in the thought that "not a single man of our generation is likely to waste his life in piercing sensitive hearts with deadly iambs and anapests." There was perhaps something to be said for art as a means of recreation. But even this was doubtful because of the enervating effect of beauty. Had it not always, like another Delilah, sapped men's fighting strength?

These ideas are echoed in our day in Russia by a group of critics who claim to speak in the name of the social revolution. They too call art in question and seek to deport beauty. But where the attitude of the Nihilists was, as their name implies, mere negation, their descendants, more wise in their generation, have worked out a novel æsthetic credo, which reinstates the artist as artisan. As Trotzky puts it, the imagination of the artist of the future will "be directed toward working out the ideal form of a thing as a thing, and not toward the embellishment of the thing as an æsthetic premium to itself."

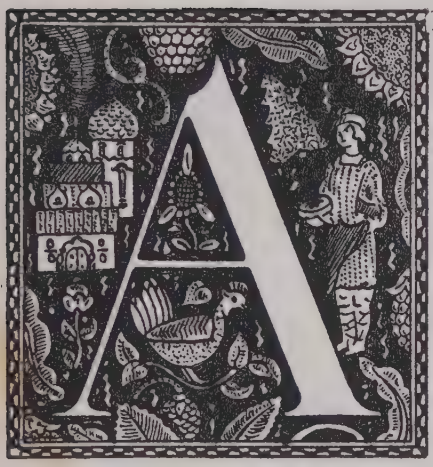
Turgenev's temperament, his associations and his opinions all inclined him toward the liberal group. The story of his falling out with "The Contemporary," when the review came into the hands of the radicals, has just been told. Yet his quarrel with these young men did not prevent his being influenced by the essence of their bluntly expressed ideas. After all, Dobrolubov was only saying to the novelist: "You have your work cut out for you. Study the times in which you live. Give us recognizable types of men and women. Show us how they affect and are affected by our immediate social problems. We don't want fantasies that will take us away from the harsh realities we have to face. Nor can you afford to deal with psychological imponderabilia, or to experiment with form. If you can't help us with our affairs as citizens, you had best hold your peace." The substance of Belinsky's preachment fifteen years previously had been virtually the same, except that he had in addition something to say about artistic truth and formal perfec-

tion. It is plain enough that this insistence on the writer's civic responsibility worked upon the diffident and malleable man that Turgenev was. It led him to fasten his attention upon the social and contemporary aspect of life with greater concentration than if he had followed the promptings of his own unpolitical mind.

That the invasion of the citadel of culture by the irreverent tough-minded crew of Nihilists was distasteful to most members of his set, goes without saying. Men like Botkin and Foeth would have been glad to have these rowdies locked up. Turgenev's tolerance balked at such notions, at the same time that all his habits of thought and feeling inclined him to revolt against the outlook of a Pisarev. For one thing, while he had long since abandoned many of the sentiments of his youth, he clung firmly to those that remained, and one of them was that art is an absolute good. He fed upon the contemned music, and to the end of his days, Pushkin, who was worth less to the Nihilists than a fraction of a chemist, acted upon him as a physical stimulant. Twenty lines by that king of poets, he said on one occasion, were enough to ease him of his depression, to lighten his spirits, to excite him; not even great and generous acts could fill him with the glow of admiration which Pushkin kindled. Literature alone, he said, had the faculty of giving him a rare serenity, whose coming he recognized by a peculiar physical happening, an agreeable sensation in his cheeks. And yet these young radicals, hostile to everything that he cherished, exercised a certain fascination over him. He felt that they were nearest to the heart of the age, whose chronicler he considered it incumbent upon him to be. Besides, here were men, who in spite of their puerile aberrations and shortcomings, possessed a single-mindedness and a vitality which he missed in himself, envied in others, and created in his characters.

CHAPTER XXIII

"FATHERS AND CHILDREN"



LWAYS ill at ease when it came to traffic with abstract ideas, principles, opinions, Turgenev felt sure of himself only when he was dealing with what is visible, audible, tangible. Such matters as division of fractions or the mechanism of a watch were, he confessed, quite beyond him. "When I don't have to do with concrete figures," he wrote, "I am entirely lost and I don't know where to turn. It always seems to me that exactly the opposite of what I say could be asserted with equal justice. But if I am speaking of a red nose and blonde hair, then the hair is blonde and the nose red; no amount of reflection will change that."

Belinsky had said at the outset of Turgenev's career that while he was extremely observant, he had no imagination. The young author had agreed with this judgment whole-heartedly. To the end he was possessed by a self-distrust which would not allow him to rely upon his inner consciousness and led him to lean heavily upon the world. George Moore went to the root of the matter when he said that Turgenev had the illuminative rather than the creative imagination and that he "borrowed" his stories, leaving them, as far as structure went, much as he found them.

Turgenev confessed that he envied the English their secret of making a successful plot, an ability which he found lacking in himself as in so many Russian writers. He had a prodigious mem-

ory, which served him well. He liked to insist that his characters were not invented, but discovered. He stalked them with the patience, the eagerness, and the skill with which he pursued his woodcock and his partridge. Indeed, it appears that he almost invariably drew from living models and that his fictions were fathered by experience rather than by fancy. He told a friend that it was his custom, after meeting a stranger, to set down in his note-book any peculiarities he had observed. He studied Lavater's work on physiognomy from cover to cover. Drawing-rooms, railway carriages, and reading-rooms were his favorite observatories. He did not hesitate to incorporate verbatim in his story, "The Brigadier," a private letter which he found among his mother's papers. If he had had his choice, he once remarked, he would have been a writer like Gibbon. The novelist had the historian's need for documentation. He proved his artistry by digesting his documents and turning them into flesh and blood.

In the case of "Fathers and Children," as in most of his writings, the germ came to Turgenev not in the form of a situation or an idea, but in that of a person. Chancing to meet in a railway train a provincial doctor who, talking shop, had something to say on the subject of anthrax, Turgenev was struck by the man's rough, matter-of-fact, candid manner. It flashed upon him that here was a representative of an emerging and significant type. He relates in his Reminiscences how he began to look about him for other signs pointing to the rise of this type. He could find no effigy of his traveling companion in any work of fiction. But as he attended literary dinners in Moscow and read the Petersburg reviews, it seemed to him that he was always just on the edge of tracking down his quarry. And yet the traces were so faint and unfamiliar that he sometimes thought he was "chasing a ghost."

The notion of building a novel around this figure occurred to him during his stay at Ventnor, where he had gone in August, 1860, for the sake of the bathing. When he confided his project to one of his literary friends there, he met only discouragement, and with his usual suggestibility dropped the idea forthwith. Later in the summer when he was back in Paris again, the thought returned to him with renewed strength, and he found himself in-

creasingly absorbed in it. In October he was writing to Countess Lambert that the stuff for his new novel was all in his head, but that "the spark which must kindle everything had not yet blazed up."

It was presumably about this time that he began to get up for his characters the *"dossiers"* without which he could not begin work on a novel. He was in the habit, as he told Henry James among others, of setting down "a sort of biography of each of his characters, and everything that they had done and that had happened to them up to the opening of the story." As in the case of "On the Eve," he kept a diary for one of the characters, but this time it was not the journal of a minor figure, but of the protagonist, Bazarov, whom he was modeling partly on his railway companion, partly on another man who was later exiled to Siberia. He was drawing his people, by his own account, as he might have sketched "mushrooms, leaves, trees," things that he had seen until, in the Russian phrase, they had "calloused his eyes." In the winter he was at work on the first chapters and by July 19 of the next year he was telling Countess Lambert that in about two weeks he expected to taste his "only joy in life," that is, "writing the last line." The next six months were given over to revision. In later years he asserted that he had written the novel seemingly without volition, almost surprised at what came from his pen.

In September the manuscript went to the judicative Annenkov for a first reading. He swallowed it in two days. Then it went the rounds. Turgenev, who at first had been buoyed up with confidence in his book, became more and more doubtful of it as he received his friends' comments. Katkov, the editor of "The Russian Herald," in which it was to make its first appearance, disliked it for what he considered its outrageous adulation of the radicals. Others condemned it as an attack upon the younger generation. Countess Lambert had nothing good to say for it. In the distress and confusion that seized him, Turgenev had an impulse, which he did not obey, to feed the manuscript to the flames. What increased his perplexities was the news of student riots in Petersburg. Should he, in such circumstances, allow a work which had a bearing, however remote, upon the political situation, to appear in type? Turgenev's hemmings and hawings went on until the exasperated An-

nenkov, who as usual had taken it upon himself to see the manuscript through the press, was ready to wash his hands of it. The author wrote to Countess Lambert that he finally published the book only because Katkov insisted on having it and because he himself needed the money.

When that delightful period was over during which the figures for his novel floated like nebulæ through his mind, and he once had a good grasp of his characters, Turgenev's final move, according to James, was the arduous business of devising the action which would lead them to reveal their inner natures. In "Fathers and Children" the novelist put Bazarov through his paces by taking this brusque commoner on a visit to a house of gentlefolk; by leading him into arguments with his two middle-aged, cultivated hosts; by making him fall in love with a beautiful, ineffectual, frigid lady; by involving him in a stupid, almost comical duel with one of his hosts, because he had been caught kissing the mistress of the other; by engaging him in talk with his earnest, apish, pliant disciple; by sending him home to see his pathetic old parents; by bringing upon him an untimely death, the result of an infection contracted at a rural post-mortem.

One might perhaps wish that the author had seen fit to show Bazarov in the urban setting in which a man of his type was more likely to be found, rather than against the manorial background with its lax, gracious, somnolent atmosphere. Then, too, the modern reader is inclined to resent Turgenev's awkwardness in dealing with the natural sciences, to which his hero is devoted. But these are only minor flaws. Turgenev gave to this work all that was in him: the fruit of his contacts with men and women, his knowledge of Russian social history, his lyric sensitiveness to the natural scene and to the fine vibrations of the human mood, his penchant for satire, his little faith overlaid by a composed despair.

From the moment when we first see Bazarov taking his time about offering his bare red hand to his host, and turning down the collar of his nondescript coat to show his long, thin face, with its sandy side-whiskers and cool green eyes, to the moment, a few months later, when the dying agnostic raises one eyelid in horror as the priest administers the last sacrament, we are in the presence

of a torso modeled, if not quite with the elemental energy, yet with all the sure skill of a Rodin. Turgenev believed that to be a novelist was to be "objective." He meant that novel-writing was an art which could be practised only by one who was concerned with representing the world about him, rather than in rendering its effect upon him; an art which required an interest in and a cumulative knowledge of other people's lives, as well as an understanding of the hidden forces that shaped them. He himself did not quite answer to this description of a novelist. Alert as he was to every aspect of the sensible world, his mind nevertheless was a mind that was turned inward. He lived, like a character in one of his early works, in a room walled with mirrors, and created most of his heroes in his own image. Bazarov would seem to be the magnificent exception to this rule. This hard-headed medic, with his plebeian pride, his contempt for the finicky gentry, his scorn of the fine arts, his disgust with all accepted values, this cynic, this barbarian, this "Nihilist" is at once an extraordinary example of what objective insight can achieve, and in some respects a fulfilment of Turgenev's day-dream of the self he vainly longed to be.

An hour and a half after finishing the novel, he noted in his diary (July 30, 1861) that while writing the book he had felt "an involuntary attraction" toward his hero. A few months after the book appeared, he wrote to Foeth that he did n't know whether he liked Bazarov or not. Seven years later he stated publicly that he agreed with all of Bazarov's views, except for his ideas on art. On the other hand, we have the author's word for it that Nikolai Petrovich Kirsanov was something of a self-portrait, and Nikolai Petrovich is one of the two men who symbolize the older generation where Bazarov is the epitome of the younger. It is certain that the admiration he felt for his hero went hand in hand with regret for the traditions the man was bent on smashing.

One of Bazarov's sentiments was undoubtedly shared by his creator—dislike of the gentry. Indeed, Turgenev's treatment of them in this novel afforded him the strange satisfaction of the flagellant. He spoke of the book, shortly after it was published, as having been directed against the class into which he was born. Look at these gently nurtured Kirsanovs, both young and old, and what do you

find? "Weakness, flabbiness, inadequacy." And these were gentlefolk of the better sort. "If the cream is bad, what can the milk be like?" How well he knew these people—their good intentions, their feeble achievements, their sensibilities, so readily touched by the glow of a setting sun which makes the aspens look like pines, or by enchanted memories of a dead love, or by a line of verse, or by a point of honor! But the knowledge which made him contemptuous of them, stirred his pity, too, and Nikolai Petrovich, at least, is a lovable fellow. When it came to the drawing of Bazarov's parents, Turgenev bathed them in an atmosphere of such tenderness and burdened them with so cruel a tragedy, that these passages are among the most moving in literature. As he wrote the last lines, in which the old couple are shown visiting the grave of their only son, Turgenev had to turn away his head, so that his tears would not blot the manuscript, and even in such a dry-eyed age as ours, few readers will finish the paragraph without blinking.

Throughout the novel, the writing is on an extraordinarily high plane. What is not perfectly expressed, is perfectly suggested. The description of Bazarov's illness gave Chekhov, a physician as well as an artist, the sensation of having "caught the infection from him." It is true that the plot, while plausible enough, has not the strength of inevitability. But, without question, Turgenev achieved his intention. The method used here is his habitual one—realization of the characters not by analysis of their consciousness, but by exhibition of their behavior. Like so many of his fellow-craftsmen, he exalted into a dogma his way of working. When he was brooding over the plan for "Fathers and Children" he set down for a literary protégé one of the few precepts that should be weighed by every practitioner of the novelist's art: "The writer must be a psychologist, but a secret one: he must sense and know the roots of phenomena, but offer only the phenomena themselves,—as they blossom or wither." Ten years earlier he had said, in the course of a critique, much the same thing in other words: "The psychologist must disappear in the artist, as the skeleton is concealed within the warm and living body, for which it serves as a firm but invisible support."

"Fathers and Children" made its appearance in the second num-

ber of "The Russian Herald" for 1862, and shortly afterward was published as a separate volume. When Turgenev returned to Petersburg from Paris, in the spring of the year, he found the capital excited by a number of conflagrations, which rumor put at the door of revolutionary incendiaries, students and Poles. An acquaintance, meeting him on the Nevsky, exclaimed: "See what *your* 'Nihilists' are doing! They're setting Petersburg on fire!" Turgenev had not invented the term, any more than he had invented the type, but his employment of the word and the character alike made for the vogue of both. A girl wanting a new frock was likely to face her parents with the threat of becoming a Nihilist, if they didn't come round. Where, as in Russia of the sixties, literature has great prestige, the novelist is peculiarly able to become the arbiter of fashion in personality. Besides, the novel was read by everybody, from the empress down to people who hadn't opened a book since their school-days, and before long one discovered at least a dash of Bazarov in nearly every young man of independent spirit.

Not that the general public understood Turgenev's intention in the novel. The conservatives applauded him for having "caricatured" and shown up these dreadful Nihilists. The radical youth, placing the author's sympathies where the conservatives did, was ready to burn him in effigy. Some few recognized themselves in Bazarov, and acknowledged the book to be an honest objective study of "the children," by a fair-minded representative of the older generation. Most of them, however, saw in it a slanderous attack. Some of his young compatriots in Heidelberg, he said, wrote to him threatening to descend upon him in Baden to settle accounts. It was a disconcerting reception. Turgenev wrote bitterly to a friend: "I was struck by hands I wanted to clasp, and caressed by hands from whose touch I wanted to fly to the ends of the earth." Fortunately for his peace of mind he never knew the worst: a secret police report for 1862, which only came to light recently, commended the author for a novel which shook the doctrine of materialism and "branded our revolutionists with the biting name of Nihilist."

It was the greater blow to him to find that he was at odds with

the younger generation because, aside from the disagreeable business of being considered an old fogey, if he had n't made his public see that he admired Bazarov, then he was a failure as a novelist. "If the reader does n't love Bazarov," he wrote to a friend soon after the book appeared, "with all his coarseness, heartlessness, pitiless dryness, and brusqueness, it 's my fault. I have n't achieved my purpose. . . . I envisaged a somber figure, savage, huge, half-imbedded in the soil, strong, honest, a man of wrath, and yet for all that doomed to perish, because he was only on the threshold of the future." This giant a caricature! And yet Turgenev could find only two men who knew at what he was aiming: Botkin and Dostoyevsky, a strange pair. And perhaps a third, the poet Maikov, to whom he wrote: "Now I can say to myself that I could n't have written something altogether absurd if such people as you and Dostoyevsky pat me on the head, and say, Very good, my boy, I 'll give you eighty per cent. on that!" For his own part, he was as nearly content with his book as he ever could be. He told Annenkov as much, saying that he was "for the first time . . . seriously satisfied" with his work, although sometimes he felt as though it had been written by a stranger.

Some half a dozen years after the appearance of the book, a German friend, Ludwig Pietsch, being about to write a critique on it, was urged by Turgenev to express astonishment at the attitude of the Russians toward it. Certainly Pietsch as a clear-sighted outsider could see the absurdity of taking Bazarov as a vicious lampoon against the younger generation. Turgenev went on:

> Do rather show that I conceived the fellow entirely too heroically, too ideally (which is true), and that the Russian youth is altogether too thin-skinned. Because of Bazarov I was (and for that matter, still am) so spattered with muck and filth; so much abuse and opprobrium, so many curses, have been heaped upon my head (Vidocq, Judas, lout, ass, poisonous toad, spittoon—this was the least that was said of me) that it would be a satisfaction to me to prove that other nations look at the matter in a different light.

What kept the young people from accepting Bazarov as a portrait of themselves was the fact that, aside from his lack of a

political program, he had no interest in bettering the lot of the masses, which became, as the years passed, their fundamental concern. On a hot afternoon Bazarov and the young Kirsanov are lying in the shadow of a haystack and philosophizing. The Nihilist is in a mood for metaphysical speculation. Talk turns upon Russia, and he observes to his companion in a deliberate tone:

"Here, for instance, you said to-day, as we passed the cottage of your steward, Philip,—it 's such a fine, white one,—you said that Russia would attain perfection when the last peasant would have such a house, and every one of us ought to help to bring this about. . . . But as you spoke I hated this last peasant, Philip or Sidor, for whom I am to wear myself out, and who won't even say thanks to me. . . . And what do I want with his thanks, anyway? He 'll live in a white cottage, and burdocks will be growing out of me. Well, and what next?"

To the advanced youth such unsocial ideas were simply abominable. And yet it was not out of character for Bazarov to speak in this fashion, because what Turgenev was representing was not so much a revolutionist as the stuff out of which revolutionists came to be made. It is conceivable that he meted out to his hero a premature death precisely because his denying and denouncing was merely preliminary to a more constructive phase of social criticism. In saying that Bazarov was "doomed to perish because he was only on the threshold of the future," he may have meant just this. But looking at the novel in the light of the author's personality, it seems more likely that he killed off his hero in obedience less to a law of that man's nature than to a law of his own nature. Turgenev was inclined to accept the idea of an ironic fate, smiting the strong with the weapons of chance, and passing over the nullities, and moreover, he could never quite bring himself to crown the work of his characters with success, or to grant them that sense of accomplishment which he had never fully tasted, himself.

CHAPTER XXIV

DIFFERENT CLAY

IGHTEEN hundred and sixty-one should rightly have been a red-letter year for Turgenev. There was the Act of Emancipation. There was, on the personal plane, his work on "Fathers and Children." But whatever satisfaction both may have offered him, was tainted by a number of unpleasantnesses. A publisher who had undertaken to get out a collected edition of his writings, in four volumes, went bankrupt, and left him out of pocket. Early in the year he quarreled with Nekrasov. Before the year was over he was twice on the verge of a duel with Tolstoy.

The history of the relation of these two is the record of the conflict between a man whose conscience was active chiefly where his writing was concerned, and who was too weak to cling to any rigid standard in his personal life, and, on the other hand, a magnificent artist, whose deepest, if at first unconscious interest, was not good writing, but the good life. They had been hearing of each other, through mutual friends, and admiring one another's work, for some time previous to their first meeting. Tolstoy, months in advance of their actual encounter, commissioned a young relative who knew Turgenev, to embrace the novelist for him, and a few weeks before they came together Turgenev wrote to Tolstoy, then on the Crimean front, hoping he would be spared by the bullets, for the

Muse. "A Sportsman's Sketches," Tolstoy placed with Rousseau, Dickens, the Gospels, Prescott's "Conquest of Mexico," as a book which deeply influenced him in his teens. When his own sons were growing up, he recommended it to them as better than any of Turgenev's novels. As for Turgenev, he cried hurrah over Tolstoy's "Sebastopol Tales," and drank a glass of champagne to the author. Three years earlier, while confined at Spasskoye, he had discovered in "The Contemporary" an anonymous piece, called "Childhood," which he was moved to read aloud to a group including Tolstoy's sister, who recognized the life portrayed, but did not suspect that her brother Leo was capable of such writing.

By the time the two men were finally brought together, Turgenev was already the leading literary figure in Petersburg, and, at thirty-seven, was beginning to assume his rôle of the middle-aged man. Tolstoy, ten years his junior, was an army officer, with more than one published narrative to his credit, and a strong taste for wine, cards, and gipsies. They had no sooner met, on November 21, 1855, than Tolstoy became Turgenev's guest, or what Varvara Petrovna, who allowed a "guest" only three days, would have called a "resident." A friend of Turgenev's, coming into his Petersburg apartment one winter morning, saw a saber on the hatrack, and was asked by the servant to be quiet, as its owner, the young Count Tolstoy, was asleep in the drawing-room. The young man was sowing his wild oats with an abandon impossible to his elder, who took both his vices and his virtues more easily. On December 9, 1855, Turgenev was writing to Annenkov: "Just think of it! Tolstoy has been staying with me over two weeks. . . . You can't imagine what a fine and remarkable fellow he is, although, because of his savagery and buffalo-like stubbornness, I've nicknamed him the Troglodyte. I've conceived a strange affection for him, which has something paternal about it."

This affection was soon tried, and sorely. The count had as many spines as a hedgehog, and Turgenev never knew where to have the discomfiting creature, who was alternatively proud and humble, reserved and effusive, earnest and frivolous, simple and full of snobbish affectations. Tolstoy's behavior in the "Contemporary" circle was a constant source of irritation. He seemed to take pleas-

ure in stepping on every one's toes. He came uninvited to a dinner-meeting of the group, held in memory of Belinsky, and inquired of the company how they knew that Belinsky was n't "a son of a b——." They revered George Sand. Tolstoy sneered at her. In the hearing of Mme. Panayev, who practised what the lady novelist preached, he would remark that George Sand's women should be tied to the wheels of a chariot and dragged through the streets of Petersburg. When they spoke warmly of Herzen, he made disparaging comments. And he loathed their Shakspere. In his diary he noted: "The editors of 'The Contemporary' repel me. A meeting of litterateurs and learned men is repulsive." He thought that these luminaries with whom Turgenev was then on such good terms, were incapable of the generous self-surrender which he demanded in human intercourse—demanded, but himself refrained from, except for sudden embarrassing outbursts of affection.

Turgenev found himself involved in futile arguments with his young friend, which only ended in sullen tiffs. Foeth's memoirs offer a glimpse of two such squabbles, which took place at Nekrasov's. Thus we hear Tolstoy shouting, with a flash of his maddening steel-gray eyes:

"I stand in the doorway, with a dagger or a saber, and I say, 'As long as I live, no one shall enter here.' That I call conviction! And you—you 're trying to hide your real thoughts from each other, and you call that conviction!"

Turgenev, in the thin falsetto of rage, (he retained the shrill voice of adolescence late in life) gasps irrelevantly:

"Why do you come here? This is n't where you belong. Go to Princess So-and-So."

"I don't have to ask you where to go, do I? Anyway, idle talk won't turn into conviction because of my coming."

And then there is the scene in which Turgenev, his hand at his throat, and "with the eyes of a dying gazelle," squeaks: "I can no more; I have bronchitis," whereat Tolstoy grumbles: "Bronchitis is an imaginary disease; bronchitis is a metal," and forthwith retires to the next room, where he curls up in glum silence on the divan. Turgenev strides up and down in despair.

"Darling Tolstoy," says a friendly witness, trying to make peace,

"do calm yourself. You don't know how he esteems and loves you."

But Tolstoy, with dilating nostrils, growls:

"I won't stand for it! He does it to tease me. It 's on purpose that he 's pacing up and down and wagging his democratic haunches."

In the beginning, at any rate, absence acted as a counter-irritant, and when they were apart Turgenev felt that their differences were due to an unfortunate set of circumstances, which would have no power over them when they met again. "In a word," he wrote, "I love you, that 's certain." Turgenev was in Paris in February, 1857, when Tolstoy came there to free himself from a sentimental entanglement. The two saw a good deal of each other. Turgenev carried the newcomer off with him when he went to be doctored at Dijon, and they sat inside the hearth to warm their bones, each of them working on a story. Returning to Paris, they went together to cafés, churches, and concerts. They spent pleasant evenings before the fire over a bottle of wine. They were bored with each other. They quarreled. They made up. Turgenev was hardly a jovial companion, what with his black melancholy and raving hypochondria. He found his comrade more reasonable than heretofore, although still at odds with himself and so unable to put others at ease.

Tolstoy's diary for these weeks reflects his shifting attitude toward his friend. Turgenev is a bad man, Turgenev is not really bad; Turgenev is lively, Turgenev is dull; Turgenev is a child (this on the occasion of a visit to a shooting-gallery); Turgenev is going to pieces; Turgenev is vain, Turgenev is cold, Turgenev is swimming in his unhappiness; Turgenev is intelligent, Turgenev has no faith in intelligence, Turgenev does not believe in anything. Tolstoy admires Turgenev, Tolstoy avoids him, Tolstoy loves him. But "Turgenev does not love, he only loves to love." When the younger man left for Geneva in the spring he made this entry in his journal: "Went to see Turgenev. On leaving him, I cried. I don't know just why. I love him very much. He has made—he will make a new man of me." Later in the year Tolstoy was writing to Foeth: "Turgenev went to Winzig to take the waters for his

bladder, and will stay until August. The devil take him! I 'm sick of loving him. He won't cure his bladder; he 'll only deprive us [of his company]."

It would appear that this period of intimate contact only served to bring out their essential incompatibility. Tolstoy noted in his diary that neither of them had any real sympathy with the other. During their stay in Paris Turgenev was writing to Annenkov: "In spite of all my efforts, I can't get close to Tolstoy. He 's built too differently from me. Whatever I love, he does n't, and vice versa. In his presence I feel embarrassed, and it is probably the same with him. . . . He will develop into a remarkable person, and I shall be the first to admire and applaud him, at a distance." He had long since given up the notion of playing the mentor to this extraordinary youth. He had realized with complete humility that when it came to writing, Tolstoy had nothing to learn from him. Already the previous year he was telling the young author: "We have nothing in common except literary interests, I 'm convinced. Your life is moving toward the future, mine is built upon the past. I cannot follow you. You cannot follow me, either. You are too remote from me, and besides, you stand too firmly on your own feet to become any one's follower. . . . You are too astute not to know that if either of us is to envy the other, it will have to be I." As a matter of fact, envy was utterly foreign to Turgenev's nature. From the very beginning to the very end of their relations, he never ceased to appreciate and extol the genius of the artist, however much he was vexed by the vagaries of the man. "When this young wine ripens," he wrote of Tolstoy in 1856, "it will be a drink fit for the gods," and not long afterward he made bold to declare the young man "the only hope" of Russian literature.

Although Turgenev knew very well that it was impossible to put leading-strings on such a skittish fellow, he could not refrain from advice and remonstrance. With more insight than efficacy, he warned Tolstoy against locking himself into "a system," a rigid set of ideas. "Truth is like a lizard," he wrote, "and a system is its tail, but Truth will leave its tail in your hand and escape; she knows that she will soon grow another." And he urged Tolstoy to read Shakspere, whom he himself had by heart. Above all, Tur-

genev demanded that the man should stick to literature, for which he was so obviously cut out, and that, being a writer, he should not try to be anything else. Hearing that Tolstoy thought of going in for forestry, he wrote to Annenkov, "What a man! Though he has excellent legs, he insists on walking on his head." (December 1, 1857). Just a month earlier Tolstoy had himself written to Botkin: "Thank goodness that I did n't listen to Turgenev, who tried to persuade me that a litterateur must be nothing but a litterateur. That was n't in my nature. . . ." What Turgenev feared was that a "conviction," such as Tolstoy was ready to defend with the sword, was likely to limit an artist's field of vision. Could he have failed to see that the vitality which is apt to produce adherence to a "system"—intense allegiance to a way of thought and a way of life—is the compulsion back of great art?

Not that Tolstoy had by that time achieved a coherent "system." In his own words, his mind was then a cage in which a cat and a dog kept unwilling company. The cat was a jungle creature, at home in the wild, innocent alike of reason and conscience, beautiful and happy in its natural brutality. The dog was a Christian, teachable, reflective, thirsting for moral sanctions, dedicated to the human habitation, and treading with a somewhat sad obedience the path of brotherly love. The wranglings of these two tenants of Tolstoy's spirit filled his inner life. They were at the root of the unpredictability and contrariness of his temper, which, added to a proud, intolerant, independent manner, rendered intercourse with him so trying.

It was impossible to get on with this difficult genius who so often acted like a wrong-headed prig, this self-righteous Puritan who behaved like a rake, and, with little originality, called Paris "Sodom and Gomorrah," only to leave it for the gaming-tables and cocottes of Baden! If Turgenev bent to pat the dog, he was likely to be scratched by the cat; if he stroked the cat, the dog would show his teeth. How could one not be vexed with a man who so closely identified the good life with the natural life, that he would have the race throw culture to the winds? To exalt Nature, who knows neither justice nor reason, neither good nor evil; to dismiss culture, which is man's sole refuge from the horror of the natural universe!

How could one bear with a man who condemned consciousness (in 1851 Tolstoy wrote in his diary: "Consciousness is the greatest moral evil that can befall a man."), and who, contemptuous of humanity's experience, was inclined to erect his own findings into a universal law?

And yet Turgenev could not but admire one who did not, like so many educated Russians, content himself with the intellectual spoils of Europe, but was trying to earn his ideas in the sweat of his brow. At the same time it was easier for Turgenev to deal with a plebeian Dobrolubov, who would make art the handmaiden of social reform, than with this young count, who, while saying that art was supremely worth while and indeed the chief hope of a perfectible world, actually distrusted the power of art, and was always on the verge of interrupting the artist that was in him—to do a little open preaching. Turgenev found Tolstoy writing stuff that seemed to him like "a compound of Rousseau, Thackeray, and the Shorter Orthodox Catechism."

The fact that they had one social background and the same training and traditions, only served to emphasize their differences. Turgenev refused to understand a man who was "a mixture of a poet, a Calvinist, a fanatic, an aristocrat; something reminding one of Rousseau, but more honest than Rousseau, a highly moral and at the same time unattractive creature." Tolstoy, for his part, could not stomach a man who was a mixture of a poet, a skeptic, a jester, a well-born democrat; a highly reasonable and at the same time womanish creature. A person of Tolstoy's make-up was bound to see in Turgenev's urbanity mere insincerity; in his moderation, the despicable temper of a Laodicean; in his partiality for the intellect, a chilling aloofness from what is vital; and in his whole outlook and attitude what another friend condemned as "meek cheerful indifference."

As an old man, looking back across the years, Tolstoy complained that Turgenev had never understood him, but had only valued in him what he did not prize in himself, whereas he had been disgusted by his senior's overweening æstheticism and lack of convictions on every subject but literature. In the conflict between these two personalities there is not a little that recalls the relations between the

Dutch humanist, Erasmus, the first man of letters in modern times, and the young zealot who began by admiring and ended by berating him—Martin Luther.

The discovery of their incompatability was far from putting an end to their intercourse. In the beginning Turgenev blamed himself for their failure to get on together. "I was awkward in trying to get close to him," he thought, "and too hasty in withdrawing." Attracted to each other in spite of themselves, they repeatedly tried to fraternize, only to rediscover, as Turgenev wrote to Foeth in 1859, that they were "made of different clay." The same year he announced in a letter to Botkin: "I am through with Tolstoy: as a man he no longer exists for me. I wish him and his talent everything good, but as for me, no sooner have I said how d'you do? to him than I want to say good-by. We are at opposite poles. If I like the soup, I am certain Tolstoy will abhor it—and vice versa." And yet the dislike that they felt for each other was not of the kind that makes for mutual avoidance. They were drawn to each other as though what they really felt was that ambivalent emotion which excruciated Catullus. If we are to believe Turgenev, it was Tolstoy who sought him out, to plague and madden him. Tolstoy probably viewed the matter otherwise. Be that as it may, a great deal of irritation must have accumulated on both sides when, one May morning in 1861, a furious quarrel flamed up between them at the house of their friend, Foeth.

Their host's account of the clash, combined with the reported remarks of Turgenev himself, admits us to the scene. The conversation turning on the up-bringing of Turgenev's daughter, he said that her English governess had asked him, with British punctiliousness, to name the sum the girl should spend on charity.

"She insists," he went on, "that my daughter should visit the poor, and take their worn clothes home, to mend them with her own hands."

"You think that 's a good thing?" asked Tolstoy.

"Yes," said Turgenev. "The girl gets in close touch with actual want."

"And I think," Tolstoy shouted, "that a starched miss stepping squeamishly into a poor man's lodgings is an abomination. A

dressed-up girl holding dirty stinking tatters in her lap takes part in an insincere theatrical scene."

Turgenev's nostrils dilated: "I beg you not to say that."

"Why should n't I say what I think?" from Tolstoy.

"So you think I 'm bringing up my daughter badly?"

"I meant what I said and without being personal I simply expressed my thoughts." At this point, to go by Turgenev's reported story, Tolstoy blurted out: "If she were your legitimate daughter, you would educate her differently."

Foeth, discreetly passing over this remark, omits also Turgenev's retort: "If you keep on talking like that, I 'll slap your face!"

Turgenev dashed from the room, returning shortly to apologize definitely to his hostess, but only vaguely to Tolstoy. The two of them left the house forthwith, to go their separate ways. The subsequent history of the affair is a tangled one. From a way-station Tolstoy wrote a letter to Turgenev, asking for a written apology which he could show the Foeths. A reply failing to come at once, and his rage mounting, he wrote again, challenging the offender to a duel, and proceeded to send for his pistols. Turgenev had answered the first letter promptly, but a mistake of his messenger had delayed Tolstoy's receipt of this reply. It contained a straightforward apology, which he said Tolstoy could show the Foeths. Tolstoy wrote an acceptance of this apology, to which Turgenev answered:

> I say in all sincerity that I would gladly stand under your fire in order to wipe out my truly insane words. That I spoke as I did is so foreign to my habits that I cannot ascribe it to any other cause than irritation, due to the extreme and constant antagonism of our views. That is why, in parting from you forever . . . I consider it my duty to repeat that in this matter you were right and I was wrong.

For several days a duel had seemed inevitable to him. Now he felt that everything was over for good and all.

Some six weeks after the quarrel, Tolstoy's diary contains this entry: "Final break with Turgenev; he is a perfect scoundrel. But I think in due time I will surrender, and forgive him." Three more

months go by, and in an access of virtue such as now and then made the "troglodyte" brim over with loving-kindness and filled him with the desire to start life afresh with the day, he writes to Turgenev that he is sorry their relations are hostile, and begs his forgiveness. While Tolstoy is penning this humble letter, which fails to reach its destination, the addressee hears that his own apology is being shown around by Tolstoy, who is telling every one that he is a coward. And now it is Turgenev's turn to call out Tolstoy. Just at this time, by an ironical chance, Turgenev was revising "Fathers and Children," in which the gentry's dueling mania is held up to ridicule. Tolstoy's reply was conceived in a spirit of Christian humility:

Gracious Sir: In your letter you call my conduct dishonorable; besides, you personally said that you would slap me in the face, but I ask your forgiveness, acknowledge myself guilty, and refuse the challenge.

This letter too was delayed, so that in January, 1862, Turgenev, writing to Foeth about this sequel to the story, declared that Fate in the person of the post-office was obviously against them, and continued:

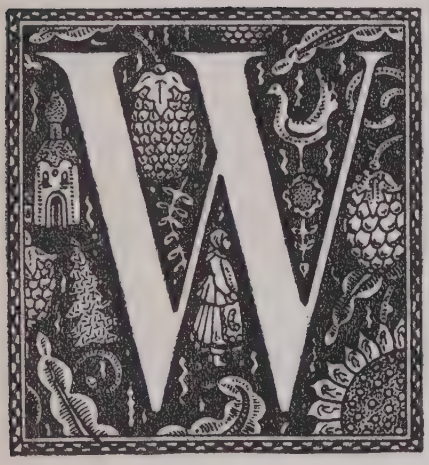
I conclude that our constellations move in the ether with decided hostility, and it is best, as he [Tolstoy] himself suggests, that we avoid meeting. But you can write to him or tell him when you see him that . . . from a distance I love him very much, respect him, and follow his career with sympathy, but that at close range everything assumes a different aspect. What 's to be done? The two of us must live as though we existed on different planets or in different centuries.

This solution was scarcely practicable. Each of them was publishing books which had some interest for the other, and the gossip of their mutual friends made vicarious contact unavoidable. Thus, in 1865 Turgenev learned that his sudden departure from Spasskoye had been ascribed by Tolstoy to a desire to avoid an encounter. He wrote to his informant that Tolstoy played too small a part with him to influence his movements, and that there would probably have been no danger of a meeting in any case. He disclaimed any ill feelings, but expressed the fear that Tolstoy was the same disagree-

able person as before: what sort of man was it who made friendly inquiries about you of one acquaintance, and told another that he hated you more than ever? For seventeen years this indirect give-and-take was their nearest approach to a personal relation.

CHAPTER XXV

"I AM A EUROPEAN"



HEN Turgenev fell into the habit of taking an annual trip abroad, as he did from 1856 on, he omitted to cross the English Channel perhaps once in eight years. Doubtless one great reason for his visits to London was the fact that his exiled friend, Herzen, after a tragic Odyssey, had been settled there since 1852. For his compatriots this man was as much a London attraction as, for other tourists, the Tower or the Cheshire Cheese. Turgenev was a not unfamiliar figure at Park House, beyond Putney Bridge, and at the more spacious five-story Orsett House, occupied by Herzen, his children, and Mme. Ogarev, who was his mistress, and Ogarev himself, her nominal husband and his own lifelong friend. A stream of visitors came to pay their respects to the redoubtable editor of "The Bell" (*Kolokol*), smuggled copies of which came even to the studies of officials in Petersburg and to the emperor's desk.

Turgenev had disliked the notion of Herzen's launching a political journal when he was capable of such magnificent writing as was to be found in his memoirs, "My Past and Thoughts." However, when the paper became a fact,—"The Bell's" first peal sounded from the banks of the Thames in 1857,—he heartily applauded, together with the other liberals, its brilliant campaign against serfdom,

censorship, and the bureaucracy. He was too often discontented with himself, and too uncertain of his own road, to find the world as it was a satisfactory place. Such men do not make conservatives. "Where should conservatism come from in Russia?" he asked Herzen in a letter written January 8, 1857. "You can't go up to a rotten fence and say, 'You are not a fence, but a stone wall against which I shall build.' " He could not but sympathize with a periodical which stood for freedom against oppression, reason against superstition, science against prejudice. For all his radical views, Herzen, in the matter of the Emancipation, took the moderate stand which was that of the liberal gentry.

He offered "The Bell's" editor aid and comfort by giving him the news that could not be printed in Russian newspapers, and forwarding manuscripts for publication. But he was apt to plead leniency and to counsel moderation, and on one occasion was indirectly approached by a grand-duke whom Herzen had threatened to expose, and who hoped that Turgenev would allay the storm. Herzen acknowledged Turgenev's assistance and such lesser favors as half-pound packages of the best French snuff, with a stream of affectionate letters. When the exile gave Turgenev a note of introduction to his friend Garibaldi, it was so complimentary that he sealed it, to spare the novelist's modesty.

After the serfs were freed, "The Bell" swung to the left. This was not merely a reflex of the growth of radicalism in Russia. On a December evening in 1861 Herzen was embracing the ebullient Bakunin, who had escaped from his Siberian prison and reached London via Yokohama, San Francisco, and New York. He had learned nothing and forgotten nothing during the blank decade of his confinement. He had, he said, the instincts of a stormy petrel and was now impatient to make up for the years of silence and inactivity by getting to work at the destruction of Austria-Hungary and the establishment of a federation of free Slav peoples. Between the urgings of this unquenchable rebel and the proddings of the socialistically-minded Ogarev, Herzen found himself turning his paper, somewhat half-heartedly, into an organ of revolutionary agitation, and preaching a communism supposedly indigenous to the Russian peasantry. When Turgenev thought of such extreme doc-

trines at all, it was with distaste. He was willing, and even glad, to contribute annually, for an indefinite period, fifteen hundred francs toward Bakunin's support, in the name of their old comradeship. His generosity would have prompted him to do so, even if Bakunin had not made a personal appeal to him. But he was sorry to see that, under the influence of Bakunin and that heavy-handed pedantic writer Ogarev, the ideas which Herzen had been entertaining for some years were becoming an obsession with him, and were turning him into a dangerous fool.

The two aired their differences in 1862 in a series of heated yet amicable missives. Herzen conducted his side of the debate publicly in "The Bell," in a series of letters entitled "Ends and Beginnings,"—it being an open secret to whom these undirected communications were addressed. Turgenev, however, heeding an unofficial warning not to allow his writings to appear in this underground sheet, prudently confined his replies to private letters.

The burden of Herzen's song was that Western civilization was becoming a silver sty for a swarming, unctuous, mean-spirited, property-worshiping middle class, to whose vulgar standards both the lower and the upper classes were rapidly conforming. Faintly adumbrating Oswald Spengler's thesis, he pointed out that the civilization of the West had completed its vital cycle, and was approaching a state of senility. But while European culture was declining graveward, a rough music, as of spring freshets, was rising in the East. There, on the Russian plains, lived a young race of barbarians whose wholesome sunburn showed under all their face-paint, and who carried on their debauches with healthy ardor. Herzen hinted that Turgenev, in retreating from their leaky tents and the shriekings of their lusty young, to the grandfather's corner by the European hearthstone, was merely obeying the impulses of a middle-aged, tired, and chilly Epicurean.

Turgenev denied this impeachment. Even if he were twenty-five, he said, he would give his allegiance to Western ideas and institutions. In his responses he was attacking not merely what Herzen wrote in his "Ends and Beginnings," but the peculiar complex of socialist aspirations and Slavophil sentiments which the publicist had been developing for over ten years. The antithesis of East

and West, flattering to the Orient, had always annoyed Turgenev. He felt that Herzen was idealizing his native land with the sentimentality natural to one who had been sixteen years in exile. Poor Herzen! In his distress and fatigue he was trying to manufacture out of whole cloth the faith he required. On the other hand, he was grossly unfair to Europe. Yes, the nations of the West were horribly infected with philistinism, but Russia was n't free from it, either. "She is like her older sisters . . . and she will be a slut like the rest. Of course, she 's not as pretty. Look into your Schopenhauer again, into Schopenhauer." Herzen forthwith accused Turgenev of Nihilism. But the novelist, repudiating the charge, declared that there was at least one principle to which he held firmly: "I am a European," he wrote, "and I love the banner, I pin my faith to the banner which I have carried since my youth." And as for Russia, the main fact was that she belonged to the genus Europeum. She was bound to follow the development of the European nations.

To this Herzen replied that the fact that a people belonged to the European family did n't mean that it had to make all the old mistakes and land in the same cesspool with the rest. Why should a nation like the Russian, with a history of its own, repeat the blunders of its Western neighbors? Was not a new soil enough, as in America, to create a nation apart, out of the off-scourings of the old peoples? (At the time he was rather out of humor with what he called "the Disunited States": the Civil War was playing ducks and drakes with his six per cent. United States bonds.) What would save Russia, and perhaps the rest of the world as well, from middle-class degeneracy, was the socialism inherent in the agricultural commune (*obshchina* or *mir*), with its periodic redistribution of land, and the *artel* (workman's gang), the two institutions evolved by the Russian masses.

Herzen was thus expressing the belief in Russia's unique and Messianic destiny which was an obsession with the Slavophils and to which even the most dyed-in-the-wool Westernists were sometimes irresistibly drawn. Chernyshevsky himself had once said, speaking of his native land: "History, like a grandmother, loves her youngest grandchild best. To the late-comers she gives not

the bones, but the marrow of the bones, in the breaking of which Europe has bruised her fingers badly." And one of the earliest documents of the Russian revolutionary movement contains this passage: "Why cannot Russia arrive at a new order, unknown even in America? . . . There are principles in our life entirely unknown to Europeans. . . . We are a belated people, and therein lies our salvation."

The belief that a saving grace was inherent in Russian popular institutions made no appeal to Turgenev. He told Herzen that he and his adherents did not know the people they deified:

> Your god loves what you hate, and hates what you love. . . . The masses whom you worship are conservative par excellence and carry within themselves an embryonic middle class, wearing a tanned sheepskin, living in a stuffy, dirty hut, filling its belly to the point of heartburn, and having an aversion to all civic responsibility and activity—such a middle class as will beat hollow the Western bourgeoisie which you have so aptly characterized in your letters.

If to Herzen the *mir,* with its common ownership and cultivation of land, was the precious dowry of that Cinderella among the nations, Russia, to Turgenev this institution was a grave obstacle to the development of the country. "Whatever may be said," he wrote as early as 1856, "the rights of the individual are destroyed by the *mir,* and for those rights I am fighting and shall fight to the end." As for the *artel,* where Herzen opposed it to the privilege-seeking, exclusive guilds of the West, and rejoiced in it as a free union of men working on a job together, Turgenev came to quote cynically the remark he had heard from a member of such a gang: "If you have n't worked in an *artel,* you don't know what a noose is." It was useless to look to the Russian peasant for salvation, and absurd to think that he was in any sense unconsciously a socialist. Socialism to Turgenev meant in any case a bizarre irrelevancy, denying the energies and the rights of the individual, and distracting men from the immediate necessities of political action. He liked to think of himself as a liberal of the good old English school, a believer in gradual social development, in amendments granted by the authorities and not forced by the mob. His ambition for Rus-

sia was to see her a constitutional monarchy on the English pattern, with a parliament to crown the edifice of reforms.

There was a moment in the debate when his opponent, instead of answering to the point, observed with irritation that Turgenev was not a politically-minded person—a remark which the novelist had made about himself fifteen years earlier. He was quite ready to agree, but added that it was better to be a non-political like himself than to be a political after Bakunin's fashion. For some time now he had regarded coldly this man from whom he had once thought even death would not divide him. Looking at his old friend in these latter days, he saw in the grizzled, shaggy giant, who ate and worked and idled hugely, who argued, borrowed, and sweated perpetually, nothing but a played-out agitator, a flighty, irresponsible demagogue, a Rudin not lucky enough to have met death on a barricade.

Bakunin's opinions offended him at every turn, particularly the notion, to which Herzen too was partial, of the rottenness of the educated classes. Such an idea was abhorrent to Turgenev. In the enlightened minority reposed the sole hope of progress. At home especially this group had a tremendously important part to play: that of transmitting Western civilization to the people. Conscious of their rôle, the intellectuals were in a position to carry out a revolution in Russia; certainly it would not come from the masses.

In speaking of revolution thus, Turgenev used the term loosely. At no time had he wished for an abrupt and violent overturn. He liked to quote a saying of Pushkin's: "God save us from seeing a Russian uprising—senseless and ruthless." He pinned his faith to the slow but sure advance toward the good life, which was the fruit of education, without asking himself how such educative processes could be conducted under a régime hostile to their intent. For the ills of society he knew no other remedy but what he was later to call "the homeopathy of science and civilization." The only attempt at practical social work which he ever made was his effort to organize a society for the spread of literacy. This project was debated in the hopeful year of 1860, on the Isle of Wight, where a large colony of Russians, so large that he suggested they conquer the island, had gone to enjoy the sea-bathing. The projector

drafted tentative statutes for the society, and there the matter rested.

It was one of life's little ironies that just after he and Herzen had agreed to disagree, the Government should step in and prefer charges against him, along with dozens of other suspicious characters, for traffic with "the London propagandists," as Herzen, Bakunin, Ogarev, and their associates were officially styled. The affair is known as "the trial of the thirty-two," this being the number to which the accused were finally reduced. The solicitous and well-posted Annenkov warned his friend, who was then in Paris, of what he might expect. Turgenev was surprised. Neither the new Russian ambassador, to whom he had recently been introduced, nor his predecessor, with whom he had lately dined, had breathed a word of such an eventuality. But Annenkov was right. It appears that Turgenev's name occurred several times in letters from Bakunin and Herzen to friends in Russia, which were found on the person of a suspicious character arrested on the Russian frontier, and early in 1863 he received an official request to appear before the Senate to answer the charge of dealings with the London exiles.

There is no doubt that Turgenev grew panicky. He held counsel with his friends. Should he write an open letter to a Paris daily in order to forestall the possible accusations? He could say that Herzen and Bakunin were the companions of his youth, that he was not in sympathy with their ideas, and that politics was not his concern. The letter was not written. Instead, he petitioned the emperor to excuse him, on the grounds of ill health and important business, from appearing in person, and to have a questionnaire sent to him in Paris. He pointed out that he was a writer, who must be judged by his works, and that these clearly reflected the moderation of his views. Referring to the act of emancipation, he wrote: "When you, Sire, have immortalized your name by accomplishing the great deed of justice and humanity, it is difficult to understand how a writer can be held suspect who, in his modest sphere, as far as in his power lay, sought to promote the same high ends." He begged the emperor to believe the sincerity of his words, and concluded: "Personal gratitude is added to the loyal sentiment which I am in duty bound to entertain for the person of your Majesty."

Having written thus to the czar, he sent off a letter to Herzen,

the outlaw, saying that he had asked the emperor for a questionnaire, and that in any case he had no intention of appearing before the Senate: let the Government do its worst; it would only cover itself with shame. To Annenkov he had previously written that if he were summoned, he would of course appear, with a clear conscience. He reminded his correspondent that the latter had been in the habit of calling him the Government's "secret adherent." The note of defiance that it was natural to use with a firebrand like Herzen was simply out of key with a respectable fellow like Annenkov.

The emperor graciously granted Turgenev's request, and on March 22, 1863, the reply to the questionnaire was sent to the Senate, together with copies of letters from Herzen and Bakunin illustrating the disagreement between them. The document contained among other things a history of his relations with Herzen. He stated that he had become increasingly estranged from this man, not because of any change in his own convictions, but because "Herzen turned republican and socialist, Herzen fallen under the influence of Ogarev, certainly had nothing in common with any right-minded Russian who does not separate the people from the Czar, and the honest love of reasonable freedom from the belief in the necessity of the monarchical principle." He had not seen Herzen for nearly a year, and he hinted that there had been a definite break on the occasion of their last meeting. "His opinion of me," Turgenev pursued, "as a cold Epicurean and a backward and superannuated person he expressed in his letters entitled 'Ends and Beginnings.' I answered him with ruthless frankness." He wound up with a dignified protestation, to the effect that all manner of darkness, including the darkness of conspiracy, was abhorrent to him.

The written replies did not satisfy the Senate. But as time went on, Turgenev became sufficiently reassured to joke about the whole matter. He imagined how he would be cast into jail; how Botkin would "whine," and "his ladies"—Mme. Viardot and her daughters —shed tears; how "The Contemporary" would hint that the editors had always been on excellent terms with the martyr; how, like Dostoyevsky or Silvio Pellico, he would write his prison memoirs; how Viardot would translate the book, and Europe would read it, but refrain from interceding for him through diplomatic channels; how

"his ladies" would then send him a steel saw in a knitted scarf and he would escape; how, meanwhile, the government would discover that he was innocent and appoint him Governor-General of Bokhara. After one or two postponements due to illness, he appeared before the Senate in January, 1864, to depose in person. He was kept on his feet for an hour by six old gentlemen who were nevertheless very gracious and who dismissed him politely. He had not been really troubled about the outcome of the affair. Attending a rout at the Italian ambassador's, he had been cordially spoken to by Prince Dolgoruky, chief of the empire's police force. Prince Suvorov, too, was amiable to him. "All this proves," he wrote to Mme. Viardot, "that they do not see a conspirator in me. Besides, one of my judges, the fat Venevitinov, told me my case was a trifling one."

Meanwhile an issue of "The Bell" appeared, containing this shaft: "A correspondent mentions a gray-haired Magdalene of the male persuasion, who wrote the Emperor that she had lost sleep and appetite, white hair and teeth, being overcome by the fear that he did not know of her repentance, in virtue of which 'she had broken off all relations with the friends of her youth.'" Turgenev responded with an indignant letter. He said that he could believe Bakunin capable of such mud-slinging, but not Herzen. He inclosed the text of his letter to the emperor and as for his replies to the questionnaire, he said he was proud of them: "If I could show them to you, you would probably be convinced that without concealing anything, I did not insult, let alone repudiate, any of my friends. . . ." Herzen replied in a tone which made further correspondence impossible, intimating that he was not deceived into believing that Turgenev had kept his nerve.

One of the things that he held against Turgenev was the latter's attitude toward the Polish insurrection of 1863. Herzen himself had espoused the lost cause of the rebels with an ardor which outshines that of the few Englishmen who fought for a free Ireland. Turgenev did not deny the Poles a right to a separate existence. Still, Russia's historic claims were certainly to be considered in a situation which was far from simple. What he would have liked would have been to see the two peoples living in peace and amity, presumably under the wing of the Russian eagle. He had a nat-

ural aversion to violence, which made the very idea of an armed uprising dreadful to him. He wrote to Herzen that "The Bell's" appeal to the Russian army officers to show special consideration toward the new Polish conscripts (it was the irregular recruiting of the Poles that had caused the rebellion) brought tears to his eyes. He wrote to Annenkov, at the same time, that he hoped "this insane insurrection" would be put down for the sake of both countries. He wrote to Aksakov, who was editing a Slavophil journal, that he shared his notoriously jingoist views on the Polish problem.

Seeing at least two sides of the question, he found himself in his usual uncomfortable position on the fence. This was a tragic conflict, as the Greeks conceived it: there was some right on both sides. Herzen could have put up with his unpolitical friend's failure to protest against the crime of the Imperial Government, and he could even sympathize with a man's contributing money for the relief of the Russian soldiers wounded in suppressing the rebellion. But when Turgenev attached his name to his donation, thus seeming to sanction the crime, Herzen retired in unforgiving disgust. One after another they withdrew from Turgenev, the old familiar faces: first Goncharov, then Nekrasov, then Tolstoy, now Herzen and Bakunin.

CHAPTER XXVI

AN UNOFFICIAL MARRIAGE

O see "Fathers and Children" in print, Turgenev had to borrow a copy of "The Russian Herald." The author had been in Paris the winter during which the work was prepared for the press, and he was still there when it was published in Katkov's stout monthly. Between the vagaries of the post-office and the Russian habit of procrastination, he found himself, not for the first or last time, temporarily cut off from Moscow and Petersburg, receiving neither letters, nor books, nor remittances.

In May he came home, but by August he was already abroad again. He was to remain a voluntary exile from his country for the twenty years of life that were left him, and though he went home more or less regularly,—on an average, once in every eighteen months,—it was Russia that he visited and Western Europe that he lived in. Previously, for all his long stays abroad, it had been Europe that he visited and Russia that he lived in. Out of his last two decades, it was in all only two years that he spent in the country of his birth.

Not that he had deliberately chosen expatriation. It simply happened. As usual, he was the victim of that adventitious fate which was synonymous with his character. After summering in Russia in 1862, Turgenev left the country in a pet. He had the feeling that "Fathers and Children" was facing a blank wall of misunderstand-

ing. Besides, his nose sniffed the first breath of that gust of reaction which was shortly to chill the anæmic liberalism of the upper classes, and to leave the masses rooted in darkness. He seemed to see, too, the bubbles of a revolutionary ferment which would have pleased Bazarov, but from which his creator shrank. It looked to him the evil product of the long years of repression suffered by a brutalized nation. "I 've done my bit," he told himself and his friends, "to set the wheel of Russian progress moving; just now I 'd rather not watch it jolt over the boulders and sink into the native mud." This was the sentiment of an old man, who felt out of his element in a country which appeared awkwardly to be entering upon a new era. And was n't age actually upon him? He could not recognize himself in this old carcass: he was forty-three!

Yet was he such an apathetic ancient? Certainly he was as responsive as he had ever been to the pull of one strong sentimental leash. Fifteen years previously he had left Russia, in order, by his own account, to attack serfdom from the European vantage-point. One suspects that actually he was beckoned abroad by the exquisite hands of Pauline Viardot. Now he was peevishly withdrawing from Russia because, he thought, there was at present nothing for a man of his sort to do there. His chief reason for settling abroad seems to have been the same that had driven him there before he was yet thirty. Turning his back on obtuse critics, on the thinning ranks of his friends, on the torpor of the Sphinx-like masses and the giddy somersaults of the educated classes in his native land, Turgenev went to be comforted by Pauline Viardot.

She was then staying in Baden-Baden, a town not unfamiliar to Turgenev. The family, and he along with them, were to make their home for eight years in this resort, until the fall of the Second Empire reconciled the republican Viardot with France. It was the spring of 1863 when Turgenev found himself in Baden, and a year later he was writing to Annenkov that he had settled there for a good while to come. A few months pass and he tells Countess Lambert that he sees no reason why he should not establish himself there permanently, and build himself "a nest . . . in which to await the inevitable end." As a matter of fact, on September 19, 1864, just four days before this letter was written, work was begun on the villa

which he was having built for himself next to that of the Viardots. And a twelvemonth later, having ordered five hundred trees and shrubs for his grounds, he was looking forward to the shade they would cast over the constitutionals of his declining years.

At this period his relations with the woman whom he had not ceased to address as "Madame Viardot" were at last seen by both of them to be inalterable and secure. The attachment had survived the frosts of 1860, which at the time Turgenev had darkly reported to Countess Lambert as fatal. It was a hardy plant and now it bloomed like a sunflower. "I assure you," he wrote to her, "that my feeling for you is something the world has never known before, something that never before existed and that will never repeat itself." Allowing that this protestation belongs to the undisciplined language of the heart, it is nevertheless true that Turgenev's sentiment for Pauline Viardot does not fall readily into any of the categories which man has devised for his emotions. It was neither the passion of the lover for his mistress, nor the routine ardors of the married, nor yet the discarnate affection of comrades. To a degree it combined the elements of the three, yet to all intents and purposes, he had come to accept, like the other devotees of his lady, the rôle of a friend.

His home came to be where his heart was. Occasionally he had to leave Baden, to consult a physician in Heidelberg, to go to an art exhibit in Munich, to see his brother in Dresden. He also had to visit his estates and his publishers in Russia, or his daughter in Paris, and once, as we know, he was summoned to Petersburg by the Government. Away from the pleasant valley of the Oos, he counted the days till his return. He felt as though he were living in a dream: people moved about him, things flashed by him, but no one, nothing seemed to touch him. The Russian sphinx might have been made of air: a phantom, a vision, a ghost. He heads his letters: "Baden—alas, no: Petersburg!" He feels that he will be happy and contented only when he returns to "the blessed land" where he has left "the better part" of himself. This is in 1864. Three years pass. He is in Moscow, as in prison, and his "longing for Baden" makes every day "endless and heavy." The sigh of relief that he will heave when he finds himself back home again, "will make all the mountains and the Black Forest tremble." He leaves

the dull skies and snowy streets of Moscow, and finds a green and golden world spread out below his window on Schillerstrasse: sunshine, the smell of lilac, and the song of blackbirds on leafy boughs. In June, 1868, he writes wearily from Petersburg: "Oh, Baden! oh, valley of the Thiergarten! where are you?" And a few days later he repeats what he had said four years back: "I shall be happy only when I return to Baden." The vaunted white nights of the North worry his nerves, and he is dogged by a vague, sweetish odor of dampness, which nauseates him. A dreadful place to live in—this city, but it has one pleasant site: the house in which Pauline Viardot had stopped, and which he cannot pass without being flooded by a wave of tenderness.

During his absences he writes to Mme. Viardot almost daily, with the assiduity of earlier years, filling his pages, as he did then, with minute accounts of his doings. He describes the visits to his old friend, the inquisitive Grand-Duchess Yelena Pavlovna; a dinner to honor the memory of the lately deceased Druzhinin, at which he over-ate; a costume ball, with the details of the newest fashions; the dull evenings at the theater, which is so poor that he wanted to sit under the chair: a visit to the Hermitage where he stood a long time before a little figurine which would please Louis Viardot. If he finds it chilly, he begs her not to walk by the pond. She should pad the windows of her little salon with felt against the cold. If only it is as warm in the Baden house as he finds it in his Petersburg apartment! Above all, he is busy with the topic of chief interest to the recipient of his letters—music. There are accounts of operas, concerts, song recitals, criticisms of singers and conductors, discussions of new compositions, snatches of musical gossip. He speaks on the great subject with competence as well as concern. Needless to say, when Mme. Viardot goes on tour, he follows her triumphs as he used to do when he and his passion were twenty years younger.

The note of deathless adoration struck in those early letters, is repeated here with fresh force, and in the same slightly formal key. "I constantly feel on my head the sweet weight of your dear hand," runs a German passage in a letter of 1864,—as of old he falls into the language he loved next to Russian when his heart dictates,—

"and I am so happy to feel that I belong to you that I could swoon in continual worship! When will the minute finally arrive when it will be vouchsafed my eyes to look once more into yours? Endure, my heart, and be patient!" A Russian lady who met Pauline Viardot that year on the promenade, found her large black eyes the only beautiful feature in her long, yellow, equine face. There must have been kind words in the mail he received from Baden, for he confesses that he is "ashamed to be loved so much." It seems to him, when he is forced to absent himself from her to satisfy the fussy bureaucrats of Petersburg, that separation was never so difficult. On February 24, 1864, he tells her, "Last night I shed bitter tears."

The passing years multiply the points of contact between the two, and strengthen the bond. "Oh, my friend," runs a German passage in a letter dated February 6, 1867, "I am so happy at the thought that everything in me is so intimately bound up with your being, and depends upon you. It is as if I were a tree, of which you are both the roots and the crown." This is written from Baden, while Mme. Viardot is on her way to Berlin for a concert. He plans to follow her to the Prussian capital, on his way to Petersburg, but a severe attack of gout lays him low. If he could only be brought to her in a perambulator!

Letters succeed one another rapidly. He tells her that his whole being is sloping toward her like a funnel; the comparison is one he has heard her make, and it fits him so well that he cannot forbear using it. Then he falls at once into the German tongue and the language of a smitten adolescent: "Oh, my ardently loved friend! I am always thinking of you, day and night, and with what boundless love! Whenever you think of me, you may be comforted: 'My picture stands before his eyes, and he worships me'—this is literally true." He always carried her picture with him, and his study in Baden, a few blocks from her villa, held a photograph, a portrait, and a bust of Pauline Viardot. Six days later he writes, again in German: "I can't tell you how I long, every night, for your dear presence. And all through the night I dream of you." Did his own words echo in his ears? Did he recall that he had said virtually the same thing nearly twenty years previously? "And now I can't work any longer," he continues, "as all my thoughts

constantly revolve about you, and everything else melts like snow before your dear image."

The invalid recovers just in time to meet her in Berlin and spend all too brief a time with her there before proceeding to Petersburg. From the inhospitable shores of the Neva he writes (again the passage is in German):

> Dearest friend, sole adored creature! I cannot tell you how measurelessly sad I was. Those days in Berlin, that sudden marvelous glimpse of you again,—all that, and then this bitter parting,—that was really too much for me. And the weight of the unforgettable impressions utterly broke me. Ach, my feeling for you is too great and powerful! I can no more—I cannot live far from you. . . . The day when your eyes have not shone on me is a lost day. But enough, enough, or else I shall lose control of myself. . . . Lock yourself in well for the night every evening.

The following day he writes, "The Prussians would love me if they knew with what tenderness I write and pronounce the name of their capital. . . ." Then, falling into German: "Dearest, dearest, never has a human breast cherished a feeling like mine toward you. Adoration, that is the least name to call it by. May God bless you a thousand times. . . . Lock your doors carefully." Her springtide letters, with their inclosures of grass and flowers as in the old days, are to him, imprisoned by the Russian weather, messengers of liberty.

Three more years go by. The fervor of his attachment is not tempered by long association. On the contrary, habit seems to have added to its strength. "Your absence," he writes to her on December 5, 1870, "causes me something like physical fear, as though I did not have enough air. . . . When you are with me, I experience a tranquil joy, I feel at ease, at home. I need nothing more." Their relation is twenty-seven years old. He must guard this treasure carefully. "It will go the same with us," he concludes, "as with Burns's John Anderson my jo. We shall totter down the hill together."

A German friend who frequented the Baden house spoke of Tur-

Pauline Viardot in 1859
From a self-portrait

genev's love for Mme. Viardot as being purely platonic (*"reine Minnedienst"*). As one reads these glowing fragments of his part of the correspondence,—Mme. Viardot's letters not being available,—one is sometimes tempted to doubt this. Yet all the evidence seems to point to the fact that this "unofficial marriage," to apply a phrase used by Turgenev in another connection, was not a physical one. Like Descartes in his relations with Elizabeth of Bohemia, Turgenev, whose temperament much resembled the philosopher's, managed to make a compromise between friendship and love. He was, like the woman in the case, essentially a sentimentalist, not a sensualist, in love. Besides, this incomplete and wistful liaison gave him the satisfaction of self-pity, and allowed him to nurse his sense of unfulfilment and frustration.

Nevertheless, their relations had all the solidity of an unequivocal union, as Turgenev's friends very well knew. It happened that a false rumor of Mme. Viardot's death got into the papers in 1871. Flaubert, on reading the notice, observed that he pitied Turgenev deeply and would write to him at once. M. Viardot, who was very much alive at the time, was not mentioned. Flaubert did write, and Turgenev replied very gracefully. To a Russian friend who also sent him a message of condolence, he wrote: "Thank you sincerely for your friendly thought, which I deeply appreciate. There is no doubt that if that [rumor] were true, all interest in life would have ceased for me. Fortunately, her health is very good, and of course she will survive me."

Turgenev's affection was generously extended to all Mme. Viardot's household, including her husband, and there were even crumbs for the cats. He must have the happiness of seeing "them all" at the station when he returns to Baden. He will telegraph from Berlin. His heart will leap in his side. The joy of the thought is so great that he must put it from him, not to be tormented by the fear that the meeting will not take place. "But no! God is good, and He will be pleased to see a man mad with joy." His embraces are wide enough to include *"toute la maisonnée."* When Druzhinin dies, Turgenev writes: "Death is great and terrible, and if she could hear what one says to her, I would implore her to leave me on

earth a while longer. I still want to see you, and for a long time yet, if that is possible. Oh, my dear friend, live long, and let me live beside you *all.*"

Even before the close association of the Baden period, Turgenev had become virtually a member of the Viardot family. To Louise, the eldest and least lovable of the children, to Claudie, his darling, to the thin little Marianne, to Paul, the baby, he was as familiar as their father. As for the excellent Viardot himself, Turgenev collaborated with him on translations from the Russian and was his faithful companion on hunting trips. To Mme. Viardot he offered himself as a staff and a shield whenever it was a question of getting her villa ready for the winter, of marrying off her daughters, or of running to the chemist's to have a prescription filled in a hurry. And all this was over and above his affection for her person and his interest in her art. He was always there, ready with advice, eager with assistance, solicitous, equable, and somewhat impractical. The large, lolling bulk of the old bachelor belonged to the evening scene in the Viardot drawing-room as much as Viardot dozing by the fire, the girls bent over their sketch-books, or the lady of the house at her piano.

He was sufficiently in the confidence of the "iron-faced" Louise to carry her a proposal from a hopeful suitor. When she came to Baden in 1864 for her confinement, Turgenev, little as he liked her, surrendered his flat to the young woman who was making Mme. Viardot a grandmother, and moved into two rooms in the same house. He was fond of little Marianne, and devoted to Claudie. Her he singled out for special evidences of his affection. To force himself to get down to the tedious job of writing his reminiscences, —a piece he has promised his publisher for a new edition of his works,—he makes a vow that when he returns to Baden (being then on a visit home) he will deny himself Didie's kiss unless he has worked at the confounded thing that day. The girl has a talent for painting, and for his birthday she draws a Descent from the Cross, "really," he exclaims, "a wonder!" When, later on, they all move to Bougival, a suburb of Paris, he will reserve a light corner of his study for the young artist. He sends a picture of her to his poet friend Foeth, with the injunction: "Here's the person to write

verses for!" She had thick hair over a fine brow, and a mouth like a bow, her large blue eyes contrasting oddly with her Southern face. At the German Court she was compared to Sakuntala. In a turban she has fashioned for herself, she makes him think of "a young goddess, still untamed, out of some mythology of the future."

In the summer of 1870 he informs a friend, in whose keeping he had left some shares of stock, that they had been bought for his "dear Claudie Viardot," and that should he "suddenly croak," they must be delivered to Mme. Viardot, in Baden. Two years previously he had rejoiced in the "pretty round sum" he had gotten together, what with selling a piece of woodland during a visit to Spasskoye, because it would put him in a position to start laying by money for Didie's dot, and he added tenderly: "I positively adore this fascinating creature, so pure-hearted and graceful. Seeing her with my mind's eye, I am deeply moved, and I trust Heaven has reserved for her the happiest of lots. But her health," he continued with transparent guile, "does not satisfy me. A month at Spasskoye, fresh food and black rye bread—that 's what she needs."

It has been suggested that Turgenev's warm affection for Didie was literally a paternal one. But the evidence is all to the contrary. Mme. Viardot's second daughter, as is plain from a letter of his, dated March 24, 1869, was born on May 21, 1852, and it is a matter of record that during the previous two years he had been in Russia, separated from Didie's mother by a thousand miles. These unimpugnable facts are given additional weight by the following passage from a letter which he wrote to Annenkov on September 9, 1867: "So now you are a father! Father of a child given you by a woman whom you love. Such happiness I never experienced. . . ." It was also rumored that Turgenev was the father of Marianne, who later seems to have superseded Didie in his affections. A letter which came to light in 1923 contains this bit of gossip: "It is suspected that Mme. Duvernoy [Marianne] is Turgenev's daughter. She is a beauty of the Spanish type, like her mother . . . but there is something suspicious, something of Oryol, about the nose." This rumor has no more foundation than the other.

Yet if Turgenev could not love himself in Didie and Marianne,

he worshiped in them the traces of their mother. He kisses Didie's hand because it reminds him of Mme. Viardot's. He notes, affectionately, her "dry smile," as, twenty years before, he had remarked the twisted smile of the prima donna. He writes Mme. Viardot that he has erected, beside the great altar in the temple of his heart, another smaller one, dedicated to Claudie. He once told the two girls that he was happy to know that he would never live to see their young faces lose their bloom; "we must regenerate ourselves," he reflected in that connection, "through the youth of those we love." The girls were to him the miraculously renewed image of Pauline Viardot, two naiads from that fountain of youth which he sought, like a perennial Ponce de Leon.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE BADEN NEST

ITTLE Mother Wednesday, be like Tuesday, just as little Father Tuesday was like Monday": there were seasons when the Baden days flowed so placidly that Turgenev could ask no more of the gods than that no breath of change should threaten the serenity that had come to him with the autumnal rains. Having alighted in so friendly a valley, and in the most congenial company, he knew moments when he wished to arrest the wheel of time. The velvet lawns, set with nicely spaced trees, under which shawled and bonneted ladies promenaded, the quiet waters, the roll of gentle hills, dark and bright with plowland and fallow, was a setting that he loved both for its own mild charm, and, chiefly, because he saw it, like a landscape behind the head of one of Perugino's Madonnas, as the background for the rarest of women.

True, on the human side, the town itself had its drawbacks. It had changed little since the summer of 1857, when he had first visited it. At that time he had been depressed by the place. A friend of his who had also been stopping there had called it "a diminutive Babylon," and described it as a town of hotels and summer cottages, where luxury and vice rubbed elbows, ladies from the Russian capitals paraded their extravagant changes of costume, and an "angel" could be purchased for five hundred francs. Sixty years ago Baden during the season was infested with gamblers

who came from every corner of the world to swarm about one of the few roulette boards allowed in Europe, and with pompous Russian generals gulping waters from springs once resorted to by gouty Romans; a meeting-place for the dandies and diplomats of Paris, Vienna, and Petersburg; a hunting-ground for French lorettes, Rumanian adventurers, indigent Italian counts, and opulent American occultists.

Yet before the classic portico of the *Konversationshaus* and on the shaded paths beside the Oos, one could also meet people of real distinction, who cared as little as Turgenev for the continuous rout that the watering-place offered. Artists, especially musicians, were attracted to Baden both because its air and its natural scenery were grateful to fatigued nerves, and because it afforded them a brilliant and appreciative audience. Some, like Pauline Viardot and Clara Schumann, came to settle; others came to summer or on a flying visit. Turgenev had seldom found a circle more to his taste than the colony that centered around the Viardot house. His craving for music had never been so exquisitely and generously satisfied.

The Viardots' exodus to Baden in 1863 coincided with Pauline's retirement from the operatic stage. With that tact which was one of her chief graces, she withdrew without waiting for any sign of the decay of her powers, concluding her career with a superb triumph in Gluck's "Orpheus and Eurydice." Charles Dickens was among those who heard her in this opera shortly before she quitted the operatic stage. "Last night," he wrote on November 30, 1862, "I saw Mme. Viardot do Gluck's *Orphée*. It is worth a journey to Paris to see, for there is no such art to be otherwise looked upon. Her husband stumbled over me by mere chance and took me to her dressing-room. Nothing could have happened better as a genuine homage to the performance, for I was disfigured with crying." It is told that M. Viardot brought Dickens up to her with the words: "Permit me to present a fountain."

After her retirement from the opera, Mme. Viardot devoted herself to the concert stage and to teaching. And of course it was not only her pupils who were heard in the little music salon next to her villa. At forty-four, when she was celebrating her silver-wedding anniversary,—if her marriage was without love, it was not without

honor,—she moved Turgenev with wonder at her ability to be at once very well, very cheerful, and very active. He was pretty well himself, but not particularly active, and, for all his serenity, he could hardly be said to be cheerful. At the musical matinées, given for personal acquaintances, and such distinguished outsiders as that fine, friendly lady, Queen Augusta of Prussia, Mme. Viardot sang as richly and beautifully as ever. It was not only so prejudiced a listener as Turgenev who held that while other artistes were mere singing birds, her voice carried the rush of eagles' wings. There was one *Lied* in her repertoire which brought tears to his eyes and sent a chill down his spine, *Der Doppelgänger.* Heine's weird lyric and Schubert's grave melody, borne upon the dark current of this voice, shook him to the core. Had n't he, more than once, watched an anguished stranger aping the gestures of his lovesick youth, only to have that stranger confront him with his own ghostly face?

Turgenev was not content to be Mme. Viardot's most eager auditor. When the retired prima donna tried her hand at composition, he did everything possible to encourage her. He found a publisher in Petersburg for three albums of Russian songs which she had set to music, and when there seemed to be no market for a fourth, he quietly paid the publisher to issue it. He even stooped to request Annenkov to insert a favorable notice of the books in some journal, adding: "I 've never troubled about publicity for myself, but there is one person for whom I am willing not only to write advertisements but to do almost anything. . . ." To make her go on composing, he promised to set to work himself again. " 'Pass me the cassia, and I will pass you the senna.' A story for a sonata—is it a go?" That he should end by sticking his finger into the Viardot musical pie was only natural. During 1867–68 he collaborated with Mme. Viardot on four operettas, writing the librettos for her in French. Although the pieces were performed many times before the choicest audience that Baden could offer, the music has never been printed, and of the books only the second, "Craquemiche or The Last Sorcerer," has been published, and that only partially, in a German translation. These are the only pieces which Turgenev ever wrote in a language other than his own. He was extremely

sensitive on the subject of his writing in a foreign language—a matter about which he knew his compatriots liked to gossip—and could not mention it without irritation. "I never in my life," he wrote in answer to a formal inquiry in 1875, "published a line not written in Russian; otherwise I would have been not an artist, but simply a good-for-nothing." He told his friend Pietsch, the German critic, that a fellow who wrote in anything but his own mother-tongue was, in his opinion, "a scoundrel and a wretched swine without talent."

"Craquemiche" has to do with the struggle of the Elf-Queen against a once powerful magician, and her triumph in freeing her enchanted forest from his wicked spell. The title seems to be a take-off on one of Offenbach's light operas, which were then in great vogue, and which Mme. Viardot's operettas are said to recall. The obvious intention of the piece was to poke fun at Napoleon III, who was the pet abomination of Turgenev, as well as of M. Viardot. Clara Schumann, writing to Brahms from Baden on October 3, 1867, says that she heard this as well as the first operetta, *Trop de Femmes,* three times, and "always with equal pleasure." They were "so cleverly written, so dainty, so light, so finished, and with all that, so full of humor." The great German pianist found in them fresh confirmation of her opinion that Pauline Viardot was "the most gifted woman" she had ever known. "When I saw her sitting at the piano," she continued, "and managing everything with such perfect ease, my heart melted within me, and I could have clasped her in my arms." Turgenev could not have been less moved.

The première of "Craquemiche" took place September 24, 1867, in the large drawing-room of his villa, which he was not yet occupying. The audience was more than usually illustrious, including, in addition to the elderly King and Queen of Prussia, many of the queen's ladies-in-waiting, a cabinet minister, an ambassador, and a countess. The queen was usually one of the earliest to arrive for a performance, and sat in one of the front rows. Her husband, on the contrary, who was not musical, preferred to slip in quietly and to sit near the door, so that he could easily escape. Sometimes the royal pair would be accompanied by guests, such as

Bismarck, and on one occasion they brought their little grandson, not yet ten years old, who was to be the last German emperor. At this particular spectacle there were present also the daughters of one of the first women to stir Turgenev's imagination as well as his pulse—Bettina von Arnim, now dead, like those Berlin days of his in which she had figured.

The cast was made up of the children and pupils of Mme. Viardot, who herself took no part, but accompanied them at the piano. Turgenev's histrionic talent stood him in good stead and allowed him to play the leading rôle in Craquemiche, in spite of the fact that he had no voice. The only other male member of the company, between whom and Turgenev there was a difference of forty years, was Mme. Viardot's son, Paul. The performance went off splendidly. The male star of the piece, writing to Annenkov the next month, noted that Craquemiche's throne speech, which parodied the orations of Napoleon III, called forth "thick laughter" from the King of Prussia, who was, by the way, to become the first ruler of the German Empire. Could anyone have heard the chuckle of Fate in that laughter, or foreseen how, three years later at Sedan, the Emperor of France was to surrender his saber to the general of that Prussian king?

The dress rehearsals of the next operetta, "The Ogre," also took place at Turgenev's house. He found it overrun with girls, laughing, singing, trying on costumes, and making a huge racket to the accompaniment of hammers, the shuffle of scene-shifters, and the curses of the ballet-master from Karlsruhe, who, as Paul was to recall in his memoirs, scolded the Swiss girls for their heaviness, the Swedish girls for their awkwardness, the Germans for their slowness, and the French for their chatter. And all this in a May heat that rose to seventy-two degrees. Turgenev himself swaggered jovially through the rehearsals in a false beard, a ruff, and a plumed crown surmounting a red wig which he had bought in Paris, and exhibited the proportions if not the ferociousness of a proper ogre. Queen Augusta kept on sending messengers to find out when the affair, for which these immense preparations were being made, would finally come off.

Usually, the operettas were put on in the special structure built

for the purpose in the garden of Mme. Viardot's villa. The hall was the successor of the Potato Theater, but it took itself somewhat more seriously. It was in fact a workshop for her pupils. But something of the jolly informality of the Courtavenel days persisted. After a performance a supper of cold meat and potato salad was regularly given for the actors at the Viardot villa, and if the performance took place at Turgenev's, they would form a torchlight procession to march across the park which separated the two houses.

He was naturally enthusiastic over Mme. Viardot's new achievement. Nor was he the only one to think highly of these pieces. In 1869 the Grand-Duke of Weimar put on "Craquemiche," in a German translation, at his own theater. The production was an affair of importance for Mme. Viardot, as it was to decide the question of whether or not she should begin a new career as a composer. Her friends, including Liszt, did all they could to insure a triumph, but she, realizing that her success on this occasion was due chiefly to their efforts, determined to confine herself to teaching and concerts. Turgenev could console himself with the thought that, on his part, he had done all he could.

This "saddest of men" had entered whole-heartedly into the comic parts of the operettas. He had not lost the taste for acting which he had had since he was a boy. It was always somewhat of a relief for him to shed his own unsatisfactory self, and lease for a while the tenement of another existence. Rarely he felt a misgiving as to the appropriateness of this silly mummery on the part of a Turgenev, an eminent novelist, and an aging man. Once when he lay on the floor in a scarcely dignified pose, impersonating the Pasha in *Trop de Femmes,* he caught a contemptuous smile slowly twisting the lips of the Crown-Princess Victoria, the mother of the future Emperor William II. "Although, generally speaking, I have n't much respect for myself," Turgenev commented in a letter to Pietsch, "this was a little too much for me. Still," he went on, "these spectacles have been something altogether charming and worth while."

Besides the pleasures which were dearer for being bound up with Mme. Viardot, Baden offered him in more civilized form than Rus-

sia could present them, the active joys of the hunt, for which he was as keen as ever. When autumn approached, he could think of nothing else, even if his gouty foot could not stand the pressure of a boot. During the season he went off to the woods as often as three times a week, and foxes, hares, pheasants, partridges, and boars figure in the hunting statistics with which he furnished his friends. His most faithful companions on these trips were Louis Viardot and Pegasus.

"L'illustre Pégase," as the latter was known, was more famous in the duchy than the novelist, who wrote a touching eulogy of him. He was, like his master, generously proportioned, and like him wore his wavy hair long; it was black, dappled with yellow. A cross between an English setter and a German sheep-dog, he inherited from gifted forebears a nose that became the hero of a thousand legends. In addition to being an incomparable retriever, he was a shrewd strategist. His family had been known for the severity of its morals. He never lied. Nor did he betray that he noted a compliment, not by so much as an over-modest look. He had only one fault: not having received a strict English education, he did not wait for the word of command before dashing to pick up the game. Another failing of his was that he frankly disliked Mme. Viardot, he who was generally so gracious with the sex, although, as his master once observed, he had suffered much at their hands. Could it be that he was jealous? Otherwise he was impeccable. But alas! the gods are envious of the great. Age came fast upon this magnificent creature and turned him into a slobbering moron. His master, who had refused fabulous sums for Pegasus in his heyday, now had on his hands a pensioner. The poor fellow was like an artist grown old, a singer who had lost her voice.

Gout was a serious obstacle to these hunting excursions. It made its first appearance two years before Turgenev reached the half-century mark, and remained the greatest of his afflictions until the coming of the illness that was to end them all. In the winter of 1866 he suffered from muscular rheumatism, and recalling that three or four years earlier when he had had a node on his foot, a commissionaire of the Hotel St. Petersburg in Berlin had given him a salve which helped him with wonderful rapidity, he asked Pietsch

to find the man, get the magic salve, and send it on. Pietsch was obliging, so was the commissionaire, and all was well.

Just before he settled in Baden, he had had real cause for alarm on the score of his health. A Paris celebrity had discovered in him the seeds of a fatal ailment, of whose exact nature we are ignorant, and on New Year's Day, 1863, Turgenev was writing to Annenkov: "I cannot take my mind off this incurable disease, which deprives me of strength, has aged me, and has in store for me the saddest future." The diagnosis proved false. What continued to worry him every now and then was his old complaint, and when those pains attacked him he fell back into his familiar despairs. He assured his friends that he could quite understand the feelings of a suicide whom he once saw dragged from under the wheels of an omnibus, and who, before expiring, explained that he had been driven to this act by neuralgia, and though all his bones were broken, kept on murmuring: "Ah, what a relief!" As a matter of fact, Turgenev's disease, if sometimes acutely painful, was not at all serious, and was soon to disappear except for an occasional twinge.

The air of Baden positively agreed with him. He suffered less than usual from the colds, grippes, laryngitises, bronchitises which so easily secured lodgment in this leonine head and chest. Certainly he did not again wear the "muzzle," as he called the respiratory mask which he had been forced to don whenever he went out into the frosts of 1860; his sputum was free from the blood that had frightened him then, and he dosed himself with no more cod-liver oil. He persisted, however, in the habit of bundling himself up, what with mufflers, comforters, knitted vests, flannel shirts, and the like. This giant from the land of snow was as sensitive to cold as any Southerner. He must often have longed for the Dutch stoves of home, the hermetically sealed double windows, the padded doors. His mother's large wooden house in Moscow had been extremely warm. However remiss the Russians might be in other matters affecting creature comfort, they certainly knew how to secure heat and how to keep it. He was particularly distressed when he had to leave Baden in winter for some neighboring town.

The end of 1869 found him in Weimar. He went to arrange accommodations there for the family, and of course for himself,

since they had decided to give Didie two months at the town's excellent art school. Weimar received him chilly. He complained that the houses were made of old cardboard, pasted together with stale spittle, that the cold was intensified by the metallicity of the two bronze figures in front of the theater, that when he woke up at night he discovered icicles in his beard, and that everybody wore everything to keep warm. In such circumstances no one was to be found on his Olympus but Jupiter the Cougher, Juno of the Quinsy, Apollo the Sneezer, and Venus de Bronchitis.

One thing which showed no signs of improvement was his hypochondriac temper. He was subject to fits of irrational, uncontrollable fear: he imagined that he had been bitten by a mad dog or had himself taken a bite out of a poisonous piece of fish. He laughed at himself when the fit was over, but that did not prevent its recurrence. Cholera remained his chief phobia. Turgenev, so Annenkov says, at one time, could n't see a pharmacy in Moscow, Petersburg, Paris, or London, without going in to ask for stomach drops. He claimed that when the disease was raging in the French capital, he smelt it in the air: it reeked of dampness, toad-stools, an old abandoned foul place. "I am like a madman," he said once. "I go as far as personifying cholera; I see it as a decrepit, yellowish-green, malodorous old hag." A sign of indisposition on the part of a fellow-traveler in a railway train was apt to throw him into a panic. "Perhaps it 's cholera," he would whisper, and producing a bottle of Eau de Cologne would proceed to douse himself, his companion, and the seats, and even sprinkle a few drops in the direction of the puzzled stranger. His mother, once she had lost the assurance that cholera would not dare to attack *her,* had been more thoroughgoing in her precautions. Legend has it that on the occasion of an epidemic in Spasskoye she was conveyed about her estate in a glass sedan, all but air-proof, and it is told that a peasant, meeting the palanquin containing his mistress, mistook it for a traveling icon, touched the ground with his forehead, and placed a groat on the step as the gift of his piety.

Just around the corner from the Viardots, and under the wing of Frau Anstett, who kept his furnished rooms at 277 Schillerstrasse, Turgenev felt as secure as was possible for him. Frau Austett had

for her "childish" boarder a maternal affection, which changed to adoration when he got her husband to make his will in her favor. The good soul, Turgenev sighed, was the only woman who had ever conceived a true passion for him, and in consequence she was continually pressing upon him indigestible dishes, so that it was only by dint of the most subtle diplomacy that he saved himself alive. It was not until the spring of 1868 that he occupied the house which he had been preparing for himself for so long, and which was more fit to be the home of a man who grew up in a Russian manor. A spacious garden was attached to the villa, which was built in the style of Louis XIII, and it would seem as if Turgenev aimed at making the place a smaller version of the estate at Spasskoye, even to the fish-ponds. When he moved into the villa he had the sensations of "a bride who had just gotten her trousseau," and at first the house made him feel "a little too grandiose and Sundayfied," but he had never been more comfortable. On returning to Baden from his excursions into France and Russia, he felt that he was coming back to his "nest," over the edge of which he could peer, with what passed for contentment, into the world.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE EXPATRIATE

VEN at its best, the contentment which Turgenev knew as he looked out upon the world from his Baden window was a poor thing. It was a shallow serenity, easily ruffled by the thought of decline and death, and permanently tainted by the unease which comes of a sense of frustration. What happiness could he have, when the writer in him felt unfulfilled? His letters of the years just before and after he became a Baden burgher bespeak the fatigue as well as the indolence which invites inaction. The ink is no sooner dry on the manuscript of "Fathers and Children" than he announces that, to judge by his apathy, this is probably the last work from his pen: "It is time to pull the covers over my head and sleep." He reads nothing, does nothing, even thinks little. His literary vein is giving out. He is inaccessible to new feelings. The vague and traceless play of fancy alone is left to one in whom all desires are dead, and whose activity is dying. His song is done. He is a finished man. He lives tamely, having grown into the bodily and mental habits of senility. He vegetates, busied only with warding off small ailments. He has hung up his rusty pen as a veteran does his sword.

This last statement he made in a letter to Countess Lambert, dated March 10, 1865. That very year he said the same thing to his public, more elaborately, in a fragment suggestively entitled

"Enough." This experimental, nondescript composition, in which the prose poem and the essay are happily married, contains, among other things, the rationale of his abdication as a writer. The piece conveys the idea that he desires to give up, not because he is played out, but because nothing seems quite worth while. The terrible thing about life is just that it is not terrible, but flat, monotonous, and petty. One who has unlearned self-deception has nothing to hope for. In the brief moment between two giant oblivions, the only dignity in which man can clothe himself is the stoic acknowledgment of his own nothingness. The great principles to which men cling in their weakness are so many windle-straws. Where now is the worm that gnawed the tongue of the lover who so lately protested the eternity of his passion? Justice, liberty, beauty—these urges and allegiances are fine irrelevancies in a brutal world. Nature, admitting none of the human values, feeds to the rat the most precious lines of Sophocles as readily as an old cheese, and chaos rears on the very hem of the lighted circle in which man moves. Art is no less futile than anything else. What is the use of the perishable images which we shape as we crouch on the edge of the empty dark? How can an artist view his own work as anything more than a striving after wind? What heart can he have for producing his wares to be displayed in the ghosts' bazaar, that market-place where seller and buyer are equally cheated? Enough . . . enough . . . !

This is the logic of the heavy heart rather than of the intellect, for certainly the quality of life must be assayed apart from its duration. What Turgenev does in "Enough" is vent a black mood which he knew too well, and, more especially, rationalize his recurrent impulses to throw down his pen. His friends were used to these accesses of despair, to these periodic gestures of withdrawal. So many times he had been done with writing for good and all. Had n't the author of "A Sportsman's Sketches" declared himself, at thirty-five, "a literary invalid in retirement"? But this time the situation looked serious. In the four years that followed the appearance of "Fathers and Children" he gave his public only three rather trifling pieces.

Besides, a new and alarming note had crept into the laments that

issued from his Baden haven. He made the disquieting discovery that he was cut off from his own country. Russia, he told Countess Lambert, in the letter referred to above, had become alien to him, and he did not know what to say about it. "In such cases, as the adage goes, silence is golden." A year before he made this disastrous confession he had already been sufficiently troubled about the results of his living abroad to try to justify the fact. "There is absolutely no necessity," he had protested to his old correspondent, "for a writer to remain in his own country and try to seize upon its changing life, at any rate there is no need to do it continuously." As far as his own work went, how did she know that he was n't about to attempt something that left Russia out of the picture, something that possessed a universal, human significance?

As a matter of fact, the rabbit at which he hinted never hopped out of his hat. Indeed, it would have been sheer magic for him to produce a living piece of work unrelated to what was native to him. Six months previously he had, it is true, published a tale, "Phantoms," which had but scant bearing on the Russian scene. It is concerned with a ghostly vampire who, in exchange for a man's life-blood, carries him in nocturnal flights through time and space. Such passages as those which convey his disgust with the pettiness and vanity of life on this despicable planet, and which evoke the fearful image of death, are distinctly impressive, but the heavy-footed fantasy renders the piece as a whole unconvincing. When, seventeen years later, he again attempted themes unrelated to any element of his native background, as in "A Dream" and "The Song of Triumphant Love," the results were notoriously unsuccessful.

No, the idea of divorcing his writings from Russia was a snare and a delusion, and indeed he never seriously entertained it. For better or for worse, his art was wedded to his country. He must find his material in the lives of the men and women with whom he had grown up; he must explore the landscape that depressed him with its familiarity, and the mentality that had the fewest secrets from him; he must interpret, as he could not interpret the utterance of more voluble creatures, the silence of the Russian sphinx. Turgenev the lover could feel at home at Courtavenel, at Baden, in London, and Paris; but Turgenev the novelist could be at ease only in

his native atmosphere. Is it that the exercise of the artistic faculty demands a greater measure of intimacy than love?

That he exaggerated the degree of his alienation from his own country may be inferred from his novel "Smoke." The scene is laid in Baden, but the foreign background is merely a foil for the Russian characters and the Russian interests which, here as always, are the novelist's main concern. As early as 1863 he spoke vaguely of a large work, and two years later, not so long after he had said that his pen was "hung upon a nail," he wrote to a friend that he had a big novel by the horns. He had been so long idle, he told Annenkov, that he could say with Hugo that laziness had restored his virginity, and he felt as awkward as a novice. Less than six months after the letter containing this admission went off, the novel appeared in print, in the third issue of "The Russian Herald" (*Russki Vestnik*) for 1867.

"Smoke" is primarily a love-story, in which the hero, Litvinov, a thoroughly decent Russian gentleman, is involved with two women. One, his fiancée, is a wholesome, whole-hearted girl of the sort Turgenev could appropriately place against the background of an old garden, with the shingle roof of the wooden manor-house peeping through the silver poplars; the other, a general's wife, is an old flame of Litvinov's, more seductive, more passionate, more wilful than when she had first dizzied his senses, and now of an easier morality. This lady goes out of her way to recapture Litvinov, and succeeds, but he has the strength to refuse the part of a secret lover, which is all she is willing to offer him, and after some water has flowed under the bridges, he returns to his patient fiancée, and the novel is served up with what Henry James calls "the time-honored bread-sauce of a happy ending." As usual, Turgenev shows us the brief consummation of a violent love. Amorousness he presents either in its shy beginnings or at its moment of climax; of love as a durable relation, as an every-day give-and-take, he has no more to say here than in any other of his novels.

Litvinov's private difficulty has for its context a larger predicament, that in which articulate Russia found itself in the years immediately following the emancipation of the peasants. In "Smoke" Turgenev resumes the record and analysis of his time at the point

where he dropped them in "Fathers and Children." Dovetailing roughly into the passional theme indigenous to the novel, is the socio-political thesis demanded by the mid-century Russian conception of self-respecting fiction. The novelist clarifies this thesis by opening the pages of his hospitable book to two distinct groups from among the Russians who swell the crowd of Baden's transients. One is aristocratic and reactionary, the other, composed of the lesser gentry, is radical. Both are caricatured with the skill and biting malice of a Daumier. Both equally disgust Turgenev. What a flow of gall from so temperate a man!

His pen drips with venom when he touches off the titled set: these well-fed, perfumed, arrogant generals, who look back longingly to the blessed days of serfdom; these half-witted princes with their insipid jokes and vulgar snobbishness; these mummied beauties and dully malicious gossips, these condescending nonentities who play at art and love and politics with equal dilettanteism, and whose interest in spiritual matters is exemplified in an abortive effort to hypnotize a lobster. Russia has nothing to hope for from such men and women, having no generosity, no understanding, no devotion to any large and selfless purpose, but only shrewdness in the service of an illimitable egotism.

If the indignation of a Juvenal fashions Turgenev's lines when he has to do with blue-blooded reaction, it is with grieved contempt that he describes the radical bedlam let loose in a Baden hotel room. The *mir,* the *artel,* the natural sciences, socialism, feminism, revolution, the People, the future of Russia—all these subjects are bandied about by a smoky, beery, noisy, furiously gossiping crowd of enthusiastic parrots, presumptuous sheep, and well-intentioned donkeys. Turgenev even begrudges them the virtue of constancy: within the three years which the book covers, Gubaryov, the great revolutionary leader, the idol of the doctrinaire tribe, reverts to his natural state, which is that of a bully and a "dentist," the name given to such gentry as knocked out the peasants' teeth with their own fists. The polished reactionaries and the unkempt fire-eaters are brother barbarians under their skins. These novices of radicalism were another sign of Russia's childish sloppiness in cultural matters.

Culture, or, to use Turgenev's own word, civilization, is indeed

the star to which he would hitch that great, creaking, antediluvian wagon, his country. The word civilization is constantly on the tongue of Potugin, a character dragged in by the hair so far as the plot is concerned, but playing an effective part as the author's mouthpiece. What Russia needs is schooling in the orderly ways, in the rational methods, in the habits of diligence and efficiency which had been elements of the discipline of western Europe for centuries. One thing is certain: to look down upon the West from the mystic height of an ignorant and pompous nationalism, as the Slavophils do, is folly as outrageous as to worship, like the radical set, the peasant's *armyak,* and to expect sweetness and light to stream from his cockroach-infested hut. The Russian might as well face the unpleasant fact that, culturally speaking, there is nothing either in his country's past or in its present to be proud of.

Potugin, in hammering on these ideas, was merely repeating publicly and with emphasis what Turgenev had privately been contributing to similar discussions for years. Indeed, Potugin's speeches contain passages which are lifted almost bodily from the novelist's correspondence with Herzen. His advice to his compatriots—they turned naturally to their novelists for counsel—amounted to this: give up vaporizing, lay aside your grandiose schemes, and learn your own trade well. The perennial spectator had never ceased to exalt and extol the man of action.

Turgenev had no illusions about the probable reception of "Smoke" by his public. And indeed the breach between him and his readers caused by "Fathers and Children" was not at all lessened by the appearance of this new novel, with its galling caricatures and its unpatriotic recital of Russia's faults and failings. "It seems to me," he was writing on June 4, 1867, to the faithful Annenkov, "that no one was ever so vilified as I for 'Smoke.' Stones from every direction." His discomfort was relieved by a measure of satisfaction. It befell that the book came out just when an ethnographical congress, to which representatives of the several Slav nations had been invited, was being held in Moscow. This gathering was less a scientific convention than what Turgenev called "a pan-Slav fandango with castanets," and he enjoyed thinking that his Potugin, though confined between covers, was on the spot

to poke fun at the Slavophils and to uphold the principles of European culture.

Structurally, the novel is far from perfection. The years have staled its timely implications and made mock of its reticences. The love theme and the civic strain seem to be only superficially connected with each other, and this lack of integration is in the nature of a defect. Yet an undiminished vitality inheres in its characters, in its palpable atmosphere, in its satirical verve. The underlying conception of life here is fundamentally different from the philosophy back of the Jeremiad in "Enough." Asserting as it does the absolute value of all that Potugin sums up in the word "civilization," this is by no means a novel of futility and pessimism. Moreover, it offers the spectacle of a man's will conquering his blind emotion in the name of moral decency.

Not that Turgenev completely succeeds in preventing his dreary mood from creeping into the pages. Litvinov, sitting in the train that is carrying him homeward, and watching the smoke curl backward from the engine, is suddenly assailed by the thought of the vanity of all things.

> "Smoke, smoke," he repeated to himself several times in succession; and suddenly everything appeared to him to be smoke—everything, his own life, Russian life, all things human, especially all things Russian. Everything is smoke and steam, he thought; everything seems to change ceaselessly; new images everywhere, phenomenon follows phenomenon, but in reality it is all the same; everything hurries, hastens to some goal; and everything vanishes without leaving a trace, without reaching anywhere; the wind changes its direction and everything shifts to the other side, and there again is the same incessant, agitated and useless play.

This passage is in the nature of a personal digression. But, since it gives a title to the book, it took on an undue prominence, and irritated the young people who felt that life was earnest and real.

Whatever Turgenev may have said, he was far from indifferent to the opinion of the youth. He went to the trouble of sending a copy of "Smoke" to Pisarev, with whom he had become acquainted some months previously, and who had charmed him with his in-

telligence and gentlemanliness. Writing to ask the young radical's opinion of his book, the author said that hatred and contempt was all that it had won for him from the majority of its readers, and after his usual fashion proceeded to take advantage of the occasion to express a humility which was no less honest for being assertive. He had, he said, no illusions about the quality of his talent: it was only a common, almost wild Russian apple-tree.

Pisarev's reply was characteristically frank. A sincere Nihilist himself, he said that he was not at all annoyed by Turgenev's cavalier treatment of the "radical" Gubaryov and his circle. "Fools," wrote Pisarev, "should be thrashed, even at the altar." The scenes at Gubaryov's, he was sure, were introduced because the author, having directed the strength of his stroke at the Rights, was afraid of losing his balance, and finding himself in the camp of the Reds. But the book made the impression of a strange and dismal complement to "Fathers and Children." What had the author done with his Bazarov? Why should he survey the Russian scene from such a little hillock as Litvinov, when he had erected, in the hero of "Fathers and Children," a tall tower from which to view it? Did he think that the first and last Bazarov had died of a cut in his finger in 1859? To write a novel and leave out this powerful figure was like ignoring the elephant at the zoo. And "Smoke" represented Turgenev's second visit to the animal-house, where "Fathers and Children" had been the first. Either the novelist had not seen the elephant at all, which was blindness, or, having seen him, had failed to put him into the picture, which rendered his account worthless.

To this Turgenev answered that since Pisarev, like the rest of Russian readers, disliked "Smoke," there must be something wrong with this child of his. He added, rather lamely, that there were Bazarovs about, but that having, as life in Russia was constituted, no field for activity, they did n't really matter. He went on to say that he was looking at his native land not through the eyes of Litvinov, but through those of Potugin, that champion of European ways of thinking and acting. "I rejoice in the thought that just at this moment I have inscribed the word 'civilization' upon my banner. Let all cast dirt upon it—*si etiam omnes, ego non.*"

In his letter Pisarev had assured his correspondent that he personally stood apart from factions. He had no group of his own and knew of the existence of his followers only from references to them by his opponents. It is not good for the writer to be alone, Turgenev responded, unintentionally paraphrasing the Scriptures, adding that of course this isolation is often involuntary. He must have been thinking of his own isolation in the pleasant purlieus of Baden, of his own remoteness from the world necessary to him as a novelist. And it is just possible that he felt an unmeant sting in Pisarev's remarks about visits to the zoo. How could he make a fair survey of the native scene from the *Konversationshaus* of a foreign resort? The fear that Russia was fading from his view was growing on him, and his expatriation loomed increasingly as a danger and a threat to his work.

The predicament that he faced would have been plain tragedy to a younger man. He needed the constant stimulus of fresh Russian impressions. He might hold Europe up to his countrymen everlastingly as the noblest model for them to follow, but it was them and not their model that he must continue to describe. He knew that he was so made that he must see and hear whatever he was to write about. It was an essential article of his literary credo that talent alone is powerless unless it is assisted by a steady contact with, and a careful study of, the milieu which happens to be the novelist's province. He held as strongly as ever Van Gogh did that "to grow, you must plant yourself in the soil." And yet there he was, a thousand miles from where his art required him to be, in a place which the presence of Pauline Viardot made his home. To the end of his days he felt that he had to a degree betrayed his great and precious gift.

PART III

AGE: 1869–83

Witless and doltish are men that their tears are shed for the dying,—
Fitter were it to mourn the flower of youth as it fades.

THEOGNIS

CHAPTER XXIX

THE CLIMACTERIC

UNDERSTAND very well that my remaining abroad hurts my literary work, hurts it so much that it may put an end to it; but this cannot be changed." And again: "Every day I see more clearly that torn away from one's native soil one cannot keep on writing. It is time for me to retire." Thus Turgenev in 1869, from Baden. And ten years later, from Paris: ". . . One can write very well if one is living in a Russian village. There the air is thick with ideas. . . . Here you remember the past, and nothing alive and vital can come of it." He would sometimes take refuge from remorse or reproach behind his flaunted senility: it did n't matter in what part of the world a superannuated man chose his ingle-nook; of what importance was it if his silence began a little while before death sealed his lips forever? And then he would submit that if he had remained at home, it would have been another story. "I am ready to allow," he wrote in 1871, "that the talent Nature gave me has not lessened, but I have nothing to apply it to. The voice is there, but there are n't any songs to sing." Living abroad as he did, he had nothing, he complained, to write about. In the meantime, he went on writing.

After the publication of "Smoke," his name appeared mostly under shorter pieces, either stories or sketches much in his early

manner. He adjusted himself to what he felt to be expatriation not by turning to account the immediate experiences with which life abroad furnished him, but rather by drawing upon his recollection of experiences at home. A reminiscential strain is the hallmark of the greater part of the work of his last fifteen years. "The Brigadier" (1868) deals with matters of "thirty years ago"; the events narrated in "Lieutenant Yergunov" (1868) "took place forty years ago"; "An Unhappy Girl" (1869) suffered her fate in "the winter of 1835"; the occurrences which make "A Strange Story" (1870) happened "fifteen years ago"; "A King Lear of the Steppes" (1870) is told as a reminiscence of the author's youth; "Rap-Rap-Rap" (1871) elaborates an incident "of forty years ago"; "Spring Freshets" (1872) is a recollection of "things that had taken place long ago," notably in 1840. And there are a number of later tales and sketches which are even more clearly of a memorial nature. Every road led him back to the still waters of remembrance: aside from his feeling that he had lost contact with contemporary Russia, there was his romantic and somewhat pathological fixation upon the days of his youth; the very decadence of the social class into which he had been born; his gift for creating atmosphere, which the past seems to exude so much more richly than the present.

At the very beginning of his stay abroad, Turgenev confessed to Annenkov that he was now capable only of writing "fairy-tales" like "First Love." What he meant was stories with as little bearing on a particular time and place as "Cinderella" or "Ivanushka the Fool." And indeed, the short stories of his latter years are character studies of universal validity. At their best, as in "A King Lear of the Steppes," they exhibit a wholesomeness, a vigor, a knowledge of men that fairly insure their durability. Some of them show a preoccupation with the supernatural which would suggest that the author's positivism was not so firm as he believed. As a matter of fact, like the Russian generals whom he ridiculed, he was at one time taken up with table-rapping and spirit messages. In "Phantoms," the earliest of these pieces, the supersensuous element is introduced as a literary trick of an awkward mechanical kind, and into "Rap-Rap-Rap" it enters only to be shown up as spurious, but

"The Dog" and "A Strange Story" are written as though Turgenev were genuinely concerned with the possibility of the incursion of the supernatural into everyday life, and with the nature of religious experience in its more intense forms. These two stories, like the last tale which he was to set pen to, argue a strain of mysticism in an otherwise mundane mind. But it remained only a feeble, half-hearted reaching beyond the world of the senses. He spoke of seeing ghosts, one of them being a woman in a brown cloak who sometimes said a few words in French, but never anything worth remembering. He dismissed his specters as hallucinations.

There was a definite decline in Turgenev's fertility as the years went on. During the last twenty years of his life his output was only about half (more exactly, eleven nineteenths) of what it had been the previous twenty years. Yet there was no grave interruption of his literary activity. He had one unfailing source of encouragement in Mme. Viardot. There was something stimulating in the very fact of being close to a woman who lived so energetically and abundantly for her art. Besides, if she did n't, like another Egeria, instruct him, she undoubtedly urged him on to write. With her aptitude for languages, she had picked up some Russian, and Turgenev fell into the habit of reading his work to her as he completed it. At the time when he was finishing "Smoke," he wrote to her, she being then in Berlin on a concert tour: "Lord! how happy I was when I read you fragments of my novel! Now I will write much, solely to give myself that pleasure again. In Berlin, I shall read you everything to the last line, without sparing you, and I shall expect the imprimatur from you. I will change or omit whatever you dislike." And five days afterward: "You know you are my supreme judge and ruler. I am not sure if my work will be successful in Russia, but I have already scored the only success I am proud of: your approval." Years later Mme. Viardot was telling a Russian guest of hers that it was a long time since a line of Turgenev's had gotten into print without her having seen it beforehand. "You Russians," she added, "don't know how much you owe me for the fact that he goes on writing."

What effect her opinions and arbitraments had upon his work can only be guessed at. Unquestionably she possessed good taste

in literature. At the same time she had a sentimental and conservative streak, and as she grew older she was inclined to be squeamish. When he finished his "King Lear," upon which he spent, in his own words, "all the strength of his muscles," he feared that Mme. Viardot would be shocked by its brutality. This story, he wrote, made the impression upon him of "a large rump, not the Rubens kind with flushed cheeks, but the ordinary fat-pale Russian sort." To-day a reader would not know what to wonder at more, Turgenev's description of this excellent tale, which contains no word to offend the most chaste mind, or the peculiar sensitiveness of the great prima donna. Yet there is no particular evidence in his work of her emasculating influence. In his writings, he avoided, like a gentleman, the raw and uncivilized, and it is hardly likely that if he had stayed at home and associated with virile intelligences, his novels would have had a lustier and harsher quality.

Beside Mme. Viardot's influence, there was another more adventitious circumstance which kept Turgenev at his desk: he needed money. Financially speaking, his base of supplies was a thousand miles away from where he lived, and that in itself constituted a serious inconvenience. With an Oriental distrust of the regular channels of communication, odd enough in such a good European, he preferred to depend upon the kind offices of devoted but dilatory friends. The temporary embarrassments from which he suffered in consequence recurred with annoying frequency. When in the winter of 1863 he wanted to go to Paris, this owner of thousands of fertile acres had to borrow money from the good Frau Anstett. He left his belongings with her as security, and when he got to the French capital he had to stay longer than he had expected, for want of cash to pay his fare back to Baden. When the remittances from his manager did arrive, they were apt to be distressingly small. In 1866 he said that "the Athens of hired labor"—meaning Spasskoye —was yielding him nothing better than the loss of several hundred rubles a year. Like most Russian landlords at the time, he was hard hit by the readjustments incident to the Emancipation, and like so many others, he had to resort to the sale of portions of his acreage. Indeed, half a dozen years after serfdom was abolished he had thus disposed of sixty thousand rubles' worth of land.

To make a bad matter worse, there was the necessity of providing his daughter with a dot. In the spring of 1863 he had hopes of marrying her off. The wedding was being planned for April or May of that year. Writing about it to his brother, he refrained, for fear of the evil eye, from naming the bridegroom: there had been disappointments in the past. But in spite of this precaution, the match came to nothing. It was not until February, 1865, that he succeeded in getting the twenty-three-year-old girl off his hands. The legal side of the transaction was fraught with difficulties because Turgenev had now to go through the long-postponed formalities of adopting his illegitimate daughter, so that when the marriage contract was finally signed, he felt like a general who had fought a hard battle. The dowry came to one hundred thousand francs settled on her outright and fifty thousand more to be paid later on. To get the initial sum together, he had to borrow ten thousand francs from a usurer, paying ten per cent. interest, and the Viardots lent him something in addition, since he got no help from his brother, who had turned into a perfect Harpagon.

But, after all, it was worth it. He could not, he felt, as he looked at the energetic young man who now addressed him as *cher papa,* have made a better choice. Gaston Bruère was a blond, handsome, thirty-year-old Parisian, who looked like the late Prince Consort of England and who owned what seemed to be a profitable glass factory. Turgenev thought he had never seen a more radiant face than his daughter's on the day of her wedding, and he rather liked the solemn, respectable church ceremony. He believed that the man was created to make Pauline Turgenev happy, and that the two were eminently suited to each other.

Even before the business of marrying off his daughter burdened him with money worries, he began to realize that the bad times alone could not account for the paucity of his income. While he was getting, on an average, fifty-five hundred rubles a year, his brother, from properties of about the same size, was receiving about four times as much. It dawned upon him that the fault lay with the manager of his estates, who, since the middle of the fifties, had been his Uncle Nicholas. This jolly old satyr had never been particularly noted for his business capacities, even in the days when

the widowed Varvara Petrovna had leaned uncertainly upon him, and now age was getting the better of him. The master of Spasskoye, however regretfully, decided to dismiss his uncle, and engaged in his stead a younger and presumably more efficient person.

In January, 1867 the new appointee, a certain Kiszinski, appeared at Spasskoye, with orders to take over the management. Uncle Nicholas turned a deaf ear. He had taken care of his absentee nephew's estates for so long that they seemed more like his own, and the idea of handing them over to an utter stranger was preposterous. He sulked, he stormed, he locked himself up in his room, he refused to budge. Turgenev came to see that letters were useless, and that he would have to go home to put an end to the impossible situation: a hateful business, this standing up for your rights! In March he set out from Moscow over murderous country roads, firmly decided "to pull the sick tooth." En route, he succumbed to a combined attack of grippe and gout, and had to return to the city, where he took to his bed. Upon his recovery he returned to Baden, without having come near enough to the enemy to give battle, and in May he was forced to ask his uncle again, in no uncertain terms, to leave the premises.

The old man was not one to go quietly. In his letters he invoked the spirit of Ivan's mother, complained that he was ruined by his heartless nephew, and called Kiszinski a Nihilist. A kind of peace was at last patched up, and Turgenev believed that he had pacified his uncle by giving him, in addition to such consolations as furniture, horses, and carriages, a promissory note for a generous sum, with the understanding that it was not to be presented for payment until after Turgenev's death. The septuagenarian was married to a woman much younger than himself, and it was probably supposed that she would profit by this informal arrangement, which amounted to a bequest. A few months passed and news came that the wily patriarch had presented the note and indeed imposed a lien upon the properties of which he had recently been the manager. There was a brief renewal of hostilities and a final settlement that cost Turgenev twenty thousand rubles in cash. He consoled himself with the thought that the affair had given him insight into the character of a Tartuffe of the steppes; he hoped eventually to share his costly knowl-

edge with his readers. As he wrote to Annenkov, in March, 1868, he had come off on top, but with every bone broken. The chaos in which the old man had left his nephew's affairs was such that Kiszinski warned his employer that he could expect no income from his estates for some time. Turgenev recognized that for a while at least he would have to depend largely on the Muse for a livelihood. He was not, however, the man to bear a grudge, and when, five years later, the old man fell ill, he wrote to his brother begging him to go and comfort the invalid. He had as a child been deeply attached to Uncle Nicholas, and that sort of affection died hard.

To meet the demands of the covetous old villain and to save Spasskoye from going under the hammer, its owner was forced to sell his Baden villa before it was completed. The buyer was his next-door neighbor, Louis Viardot, who, Turgenev felt, was thus doing him a great service. So that by one of Fate's little ironies, it was as a mere tenant that he moved into the house upon which he had lavished so much care. The sale was concluded on January 27, 1868—an inauspicious beginning for a year which he considered his climacteric. He had been born on a Monday, and in 1868 October 28 again fell on a Monday. Besides, New Year's Day was a Monday. Furthermore, he was to be fifty this year. And, in addition, the year was to bring the twenty-fifth anniversary of his meeting with Pauline Viardot, as well as the twenty-fifth anniversary of the beginning of his career as a writer. Surely all these signs and portents boded no good. Like his mother, he was given to superstitions in which numbers played a part; and like her, he smiled at his folly. As a matter of fact, the climacteric year was no worse than its immediate predecessors, except for the fact that it left him with the knowledge that he had half a century behind him. And soon to his little stock of cheerful aphorisms he will add a new one: "After fifty, a man lives in a fortress which is besieged by death, and which sooner or later must be surrendered to the enemy."

The year held in store for him one disheartening experience which was unexpected. In June he went home, on one of his usual foraging expeditions intended to fill his purse with the proceeds from the sale of a manuscript or a tract of land, and also to satisfy himself

about his new manager, and to renew lapsed contacts. He found the country in a sad state. "What an appearance Russia presents now," he wrote to his brother, "this land which everybody tells you is so rich! The roofs are torn up, the fences are down, not a single new building to be seen anywhere, except dram-shops. The horses, the cows are dead, the people haggard. . . . Around Petersburg everything is burning: forests, houses, the earth itself. . . . All you see is men stretched out sleeping on their bellies, everywhere impotence, flabbiness, dirt, poverty." Spasskoye afforded no refuge from the distressful sights he saw elsewhere. Emancipation seemed to have aggravated the condition of his former serfs, rather than otherwise. Through the entire fortnight that he spent on his estate he had the feeling, so he said, of a hunted hare:

I could n't stick my nose into the garden, without being assailed and attacked by former serfs, peasants, burghers, retired soldiers, peasant girls, peasant women, priests, deacons, the blind, the halt, and the impoverished neighboring gentry. Shaggy and hungry, they sprang at me from behind trees, from under bushes, from the very ground, threw themselves at my feet, and with mouths gaping like fledgeling jackdaws, they shouted hoarsely: *"Barin,* Ivan Sergeitch, save us, save us; we 're dying!" In the end I had to flee, so as not to part with my all.

It was hard for him to believe that it was only a matter of three years since he had seen Spasskoye. Was it that the place had so altered, or was the change in him? His old hunting companion, Afanasy, who on their first trip, when Turgenev was a boy of seventeen, had pulled out of his tarry boot nearly a whole sucking-pig and eaten it without bread, Afanasy who could once digest bullets, Afanasy who, never able to carry his liquor, had of old swaggered after a single glass, and now was reduced to tears by the same amount—Afanasy was a wreck. And Porphyry, under whose tutelage he had—it seemed only yesterday—made his first trip abroad, was now an old man. The first night Turgenev spent under the ancestral roof, he went to bed with a queer feeling: the old walls seemed to stare at him as at a stranger. And after all, he told himself with a pang, that was what he was. In the morn-

ing he took a turn in the park. It looked as immense to him as when he was a child—in fact, large enough to hold the entire Thiergarten valley. The trees, especially the old lindens, had, like Kiszinski's new beard, grown magnificently. But neither decay nor growth had obliterated the familiar landmarks. He walked past the place from which he had once stolen strawberries; past the tree on whose branches had perched the crow that was his first hunting-trophy; to the spot where he had found an uncommonly large mushroom; to that diminutive battleground where he had watched an adder and a toad engage in a struggle that had forever injured his faith in a benevolent Creator. Every corner laid upon him the troubling hands of memory. And always, with the leap of recognition went the recoil of estrangement.

It was just a quarter of a century since his mother had placed the slim volume, his first—"Parasha"—on her drawing-room table for all her visitors to admire. And now who was left in this unhappy country to admire his mature work? True, in Germany and in France they were translating and apparently reading him. But "Smoke" had been a failure, and no new novel was taking shape in his mind. Obviously, he was played out, and he might as well close his literary career, appropriately enough on the silver anniversary of his marriage to literature,—as also of his incomplete "unofficial" marriage to Pauline Viardot,—and when his years had reached a round fifty. And so when he came to write the final chapter in his Reminiscences, for his collected works, to be published the subsequent year, he turned it into a farewell to his readers. His service to letters, he wrote, had come to an end "amidst the gradual cooling of the public." He was laying down his pen in the belief that the new age demanded new men, and with some satisfaction in the thought that he, for one, had cast his mite into the treasury. Before withdrawing, however, he begged leave to offer his young confrères a word of advice and to set before them a last request. His plea was that the young writers should do everything to preserve the strength and beauty of the language that was their great heritage. The substance of his counsel was: be truthful, especially about your own sensations; deepen and extend your experience through study; be free to doubt everything, even the

worth of your own nation; above all, do not let yourself be caught in the trap of any dogmatism.

Some of the ideas which he expressed thus publicly crop up again and again in the course of his correspondence with Foeth, during the sixties. The point to which he keeps reverting is that freedom is the artist's natural prerogative. "You are buoyed up by joyous childlike faith, you feel like giving forth lyrical effusions; go to it!" he urged the poet. "You 'd like to undermine every emotion, you 'd like to poke your inquisitive nose everywhere, you 'd like to crack things open like nuts; go to it!" Above all else, the artist must avoid the blinders of a "system." He was repeating to Foeth what he had told Tolstoy. The writer owed allegiance only to his personal vision of the truth, and to the logic of his art. Not that Turgenev always held to this principle. Writing to a radical friend in 1876, he admitted that he should have toned down Bazarov so as not to play into the hands of the reactionaries. The artist, he said then, should have been sacrificed to the citizen: "The issue involved more important things than mere artistic truth, and I should have understood that." Yet in writing thus, Turgenev was more probably trying to see things from his correspondent's point of view, as he was apt to do, than expressing his own opinion.

The main bone of contention between him and Foeth was the rôle of reason in art. Foeth's position was that of the romanticist, contemptuous of cerebration, putting his trust in the unconscious instinct which swells the bird's throat with song and moves to utterance the Pythian priestess on her tripod. Turgenev, on the contrary, upholds rationalism. "Art, I say, is such a great thing that the whole man, with all his faculties, including the intellect, is hardly enough for it." He could understand, he said, Foeth's maligning the intellect, if he were a fanatic or a Slavophil, but he was a poet, and should have known better than to try to substitute for his Pan's pipes "the cheap Rousseau-esque penny-whistle that had been soiled by so many spittles." And again, "We here in the West," he writes from his Baden refuge, "send to school people who attack reason and recommend instinct and naïve unsophistication."

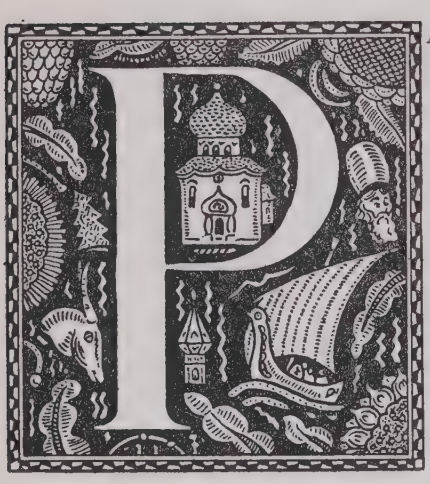
This was in 1866. In "Smoke," at which he was then working,

Potugin declares: "Instinct, however nearly it approaches genius, is unworthy of man; reason—simple, sound, commonplace reason—that 's our true inheritance, our pride. . . ." Referring to Tolstoy's idea that only unconscious activity is fruitful, he asked: "How then did the Americans build the railway between New York and San Francisco?—in sleep, without consciousness? Or is n't that a fruitful activity?" It must not be thought, however, that Turgenev was unaware of the part played by the subliminal self in the creative process. Talking to some friends about his work, late in life, he said that after some external stimulus has set the mind in motion, the unconscious steps in and puts its hand to the wheel. The artist's experience is almost that of the dreamer. "You walk," he is quoted as saying, "among the heroes of your novel; you see yourself among them, and at the same time you realize the difference between that self and your ordinary self. It is thus that in a dream you know a man to be Ivan Feodorovich, although he looks like somebody else, a fact which does not trouble you in the least."

It would seem as if Turgenev's reliance on the intellect were the attitude of a man who in his behavior was the plaything of impulse and adventitious influences, and who only in his art gave evidence of that free mind which, in Santayana's fine phrase, "rejoices at the harmonies it can find or make between man and nature; and, where it finds none, solves the conflict so far as it may and then notes and endures it with a shudder." Lacking the spiritual conviction of his great contemporaries, he was inclined to exalt the rational member. He repudiated instinct because it was the essence of Nature, that brutal and irreconcilable Mother.

CHAPTER XXX

MEEK PAGAN AND VICIOUS CHRISTIAN



ASSING through the gambling saloon in Baden one Saturday in July, 1867, Turgenev noticed in the crowd a familiar face bent eagerly over the table. It was the healthless, big-browed, thin-bearded face of the author of "Crime and Punishment." Knowing that gamblers dislike being accosted in the midst of play, Turgenev went by without speaking. He had last heard from Dostoyevsky two years previously, when the latter, stranded in Wiesbaden, had appealed for a loan of a hundred thalers. The man had lost everything, including his watch, at roulette, and in the pension the sneering waiters would serve him nothing but tea. "You are much more understanding than the others," he wrote, "and morally it 's easier for me to turn to you." Turgenev responded by sending him fifty thalers.

They had seen each other before that in the late autumn of 1863, when they met in Baden. Dostoyevsky was then on his way to Italy with a lady who had been his mistress and whom he was now comforting almost fraternally for the defection of another lover. He concealed his companion from Turgenev, but not his weakness for gaming. Having made a lucky stroke on his first trip abroad the previous year, he had conceived the notion that he could make himself the master of Chance, and had developed a passion for the wheel which was to torment him for a decade. At the time of this

first encounter in Baden, Turgenev had felt rather friendly toward the unhappy gambler, and handed him the manuscript of "Phantoms" for the magazine "Time" (*Vremya*), which Dostoyevsky was publishing with his brother. But the man was so engrossed by his mania that in the end he returned the piece unread. Turgenev shipped the manuscript off to Annenkov, with a request to decide if "the nonsense" was worth printing. The supreme arbiter gave it his blessing, but the author was so long making up his mind about it that even this imperturbable adviser lost patience.

Just before Christmas Turgenev received a letter from Dostoyevsky, begging the piece for a new review, "The Epoch" (*Epokha*), which he planned to start in January, 1864, the old one having recently died a violent death. The editor, who had read the manuscript during its peregrinations, argued that a dose of fantasy and poetry was just what the public needed, at a moment when a prosy, factual, utilitarian, Quakerish manner had driven literature into an impasse. Even from a utilitarian point of view, he went on, the piece held its own, for "Phantoms" was veritable music, and surely music is "useful, since it is a kind of language expressing what consciousness has not yet grasped." Indeed, the only fault he found with the piece was that it was not fantastic enough. Here spoke not only an enemy of literal realism, but also an editor trying to lasso a valuable contributor. Whether because of Dostoyevsky's plea, or because of an energetic letter from Annenkov, Turgenev yielded, and "Phantoms" appeared in the first issue of "The Epoch." To his brother, Dostoyevsky wrote about "Phantoms" in quite different terms, after re-reading it soberly in print: "There is much rubbish in it, something nasty, sickly, senile, impotent, and so without faith,—in a word, the whole Turgenev, with all his convictions,—but the poetry will make up for a lot."

He might continue to solicit contributions from the elder novelist, and praise him to his face, but scarcely a shred was left of the excited admiration he had felt for the man in the distant days of their youth. An obscure, poverty-stricken fellow, Dostoyevsky had suddenly been hailed as a genius by the great Belinsky himself, and welcomed into the literary circle of which the author of "Parasha" had for some time been a member. The spring of 1845 was then

unfolding its white nights over Petersburg. In the intoxication of the season and his new fame, the shy, proud young man had, by his own account, nearly fallen in love with Turgenev: "A poet," was his comment to his brother, "a gifted man, an aristocrat, handsome, rich, intelligent, educated, twenty-five years old—I don't know that Nature has refused him anything. Finally, a straightforward character, beautiful, formed in a good school." A story which Dostoyevsky wrote in 1848 bears an epigraph from the verses of this poet.

As for Turgenev, he shouted Dostoyevsky's name from the housetops, scolded him paternally—being three years his senior—for wasting his substance on women, and wrote epigrams against him when success turned the head of this queer, talented youth. It was hard for him to resist the temptation of feathering his wit with malice, even if the shaft must strike a friend.

Turgenev was in his full stride as a novelist—indeed, the foremost writer in Russia—when in 1859 Dostoyevsky, returning to life and letters after the ten years' hiatus caused by his Siberian exile, found himself at the very starting-point of the race. The Russian republic of letters being small, it was natural for the two men to come into contact again. The following year both of them took part in a benefit performance of Gogol's "Inspector General." Thereafter they corresponded now and again, and regularly read each other's books. Dostoyevsky, coming out of prison, swallowed "A Sportsman's Sketches" at a gulp and smacked his lips over it, and Turgenev found a Dantesque touch in "The Dead House." He considered its author to be one of the two or three people who had grasped his intention in "Fathers and Children." Yet their personal relations remained without depth and body.

The years that established each on his separate height showed how divergent were the orbits in which their lives moved. A wider gulf of temperament and mentality divided Turgenev from Dostoyevsky than from his other great contemporary, Tolstoy. As early as the middle sixties Turgenev must have begun to see what the complexion of Dostoyevsky's ideas was like. The man was obviously headed for the patriotic, mystical, Orthodox, Slavophil camp —in short, for everything that went against Turgenev's grain.

His literary work, too, although attesting a talent of a high order, was full of things intolerable to the elder novelist. "Neuropathic nonsense" was Belinsky's term for the experiments with which Dostoyevsky followed up his first novel, and the phrase must not seldom have recurred to Turgenev as he read the later works. He found the first part of "Crime and Punishment" admirable, but the remainder struck him as "something like a prolonged colic." These novels flaunted the psychology which he would have hidden out of sight; they reeked of the clinic; they lacked all reticence and measure; they were empty of lyrical overtones.

For all that, being a tolerant, skeptical, self-distrustful man of the world, Turgenev was less likely to involve himself in a quarrel with this old acquaintance than to allow their relation painlessly to lapse. But the meddling arm of circumstance thrust itself between them. Hearing from Goncharov that Turgenev had seen him at the roulette table that Saturday in July, 1867, Dostoyevsky felt that it was incumbent on him to go to see the man. Not that he looked forward to the visit with any pleasure, but inasmuch as he owed Turgenev money, he felt that his failure to call would be construed as evasion. Accordingly, the next Wednesday at noon, Dostoyevsky made his way to the quiet house on Schillerstrasse where Turgenev lived, and found him at home—in fact, just sitting down to lunch. Dostoyevsky had come to Baden with his stenographer, who, a few months earlier, had become his second wife. That very day at tea he told his Anya about the visit, and on the same evening she set down his words, with her little hooks and dashes, in the diary in which, with the meticulousness of her calling and a woman's interest in trifles, she regularly recorded the happenings and talks of each day, the harassing ups and downs of a gambler's fortunes, the sum spent for every spool of thread and piece of soap, the sums received for articles pawned, and the sums laid out for the rare spree when her husband was at once in pocket and in good humor.

The visit, we learn from Mme. Dostoyevsky's journal, which was published only in 1923, lasted an hour and a half. The entry tells us that Turgenev seemed to be galled by the reception accorded "Smoke," and kept peevishly returning to the subject. He spoke of the rumor that he was to be expelled from the ranks of the gentry

on account of the novel, and said that this would give him the greatest pleasure. "As usual," writes the diarist, "Fedya [Dostoyevsky] spoke to him somewhat sharply, advising him, for instance, to buy himself a telescope in Paris, and, since he was living so far from Russia, to train it on that country; otherwise he would not understand what was going on there." The visitor also told Turgenev that he was deceived in thinking himself a realist. The talk turning away from literary matters, Dostoyevsky vented his irritation against the Germans, saying that they were generally stupid and often crooked. The host took this as a personal affront; in fact, he said plainly that he was now a German himself. They managed to part, however, without an open break. How wicked it is, the entry concludes sententiously, for a Russian to speak with contempt of his native country. "Well, God forgive him! I know, though, that Fedya was frightfully enraged by this talk with Turgenev, and that this abominable habit people have, of repudiating their own, badly upset him."

About seven weeks after the encounter, Dostoyevsky, writing to his friend Maikov, poured out his heart on the subject of that renegade, Turgenev. This epistolary account of the interview which took place on July 10 is an elaboration of Mme. Dostoyevsky's report. He begins by pointing out that he went to the house in a frame of mind likely to make the visit a very awkward one. He had, he wrote, lost all liking for the man long before this; he could n't stand his Pharisaical manner of setting out to embrace you, and then offering his cheek to be kissed; he, Dostoyevsky, had been owing him fifty thalers since the Wiesbaden days (a debt, which, by the way, he was not to make good until 1876); above all, he had just been reading that revolting novel, "Smoke." And in this mood he had to listen to his host repeating all the blasphemies against Russia uttered in that book. "He told me himself that the leading idea, the main point of 'Smoke' was this: 'If Russia sank through the ground, that would be no loss to mankind. . . .'" The traitor thought that the Russians "must crawl in the dust before the Germans," spoke of civilization as "the one universal and inevitable road," and called the Slavophil will to be different "piggishness and folly." Of course, a man of this temper did not

believe in God: "He announced to me that he was definitely an atheist." Dostoyevsky retaliated with the remark about the telescope, and when Turgenev showed irritation, said "with really very well-feigned naïveté: 'I did n't expect the failure of "Smoke" would upset you so much; the thing is n't worth it; spit on it.' 'I 'm not at all upset. What are you talking about?' " It was then that Dostoyevsky took up his hat, but first he had to hit out at the Germans. At that Parthian shot Turgenev grew pale and said: "You are insulting me personally. I have settled here definitely. I consider myself a German and not a Russian, and am proud of it." "Though I read 'Smoke' and have spoken to you for a whole hour," Dostoyevsky replied, "still, I did n't expect this from you. Forgive me if I have insulted you."

Before the year was over, Turgenev learned from the faithful and vigilant Annenkov that what seems to be a copy of this letter to Maikov had been sent anonymously to Bartenev, the editor of the historical review "Russian Archives" (*Russki Arkhiv*), with a request not to publish it before the year 1890. In the letter of protest which the indignant novelist addressed to the editor on January 3, 1868, he pointed out that he could not possibly have discussed his intimate convictions with his visitor, since the man, owing to his morbid attacks and for other unmentioned reasons was "not wholly in possession of his mental faculties." He continued:

I saw Mr. Dostoyevsky only once. He sat with me no more than an hour, and retired after having relieved his heart by ferociously abusing the Germans, myself, and my latest book. I had neither time nor desire to argue with him. I repeat, I treated him as I would a sick man. The arguments which he expected from me must have presented themselves to his deranged imagination and he lodged information against me with . . . posterity. In 1890 doubtless neither Mr. Dostoyevsky nor I shall longer engage the attention of our compatriots, and if we are not wholly forgotten, we shall be judged not by one-sided denunciation, but by the results of our whole lives and work. . . ."

Recalling the unfortunate affair some three years later, in a letter to a friend, Turgenev spoke more freely:

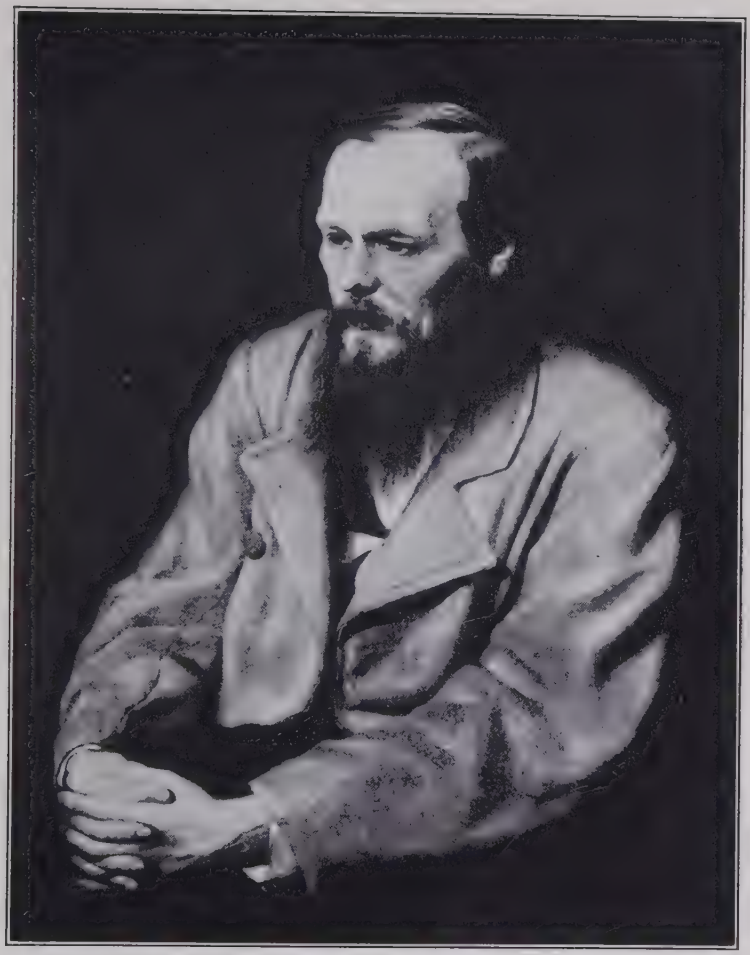
He [Dostoyevsky] came to me . . . not to pay the money he had borrowed of me, but to upbraid me for "Smoke," which, according to

his notion, should be burned by the hand of the executioner. I listened to this philippic in silence, and what do I learn? That I expressed within his hearing criminal opinions, which he hastened to communicate to Bartenev. . . . It would have been simple calumny, if Dostoyevsky were n't crazy—which I don't doubt in the least. Perhaps he hallucinated.

As the meeting was a tête-à-tête, we shall never know how it would have appeared to a third person. It is hard to believe that Turgenev held his peace all the time that Dostoyevsky was with him. Even if he doubted the appropriateness of expressing himself freely before his visitor, it is quite plausible that he did talk about the things which were nearest his heart. That Dostoyevsky twisted whatever he may have heard from Turgenev's lips, is even more credible. He was naturally inclined to exaggerate and intensify. His mental state at the time showed a lack of balance extraordinary even for him. His gambling fever was at once an indication of, and a contributing cause to, his nervous disorder. If he did not actually hallucinate, he must have given his imagination free rein.

Not that he imputed these opinions to Turgenev without ground. Turgenev did have harsh things to say about Russia. His attitude may have been due in part to an unconscious desire to excuse his expatriation. But he could not have contemned his country so thoroughly if he had not loved it deeply. He did on one occasion declare publicly that he owed Germany too much not to love and respect it as his "second fatherland." But he admired it less for its own sake than because it embodied the principles of "civilization" which he wanted to see take root at home. He did lack religious faith. But he felt this to be rather his affliction than his pride. He was a rationalist, but not a materialist. Dostoyevsky's hatred—and he had a genius for hating—utterly blinded him, and led him to see the meek, melancholy Turgenev as an arrogant Judas, a man without a country and without a God.

Among the things that fed Dostoyevsky's animosity was his envy of his confrère's financial security. That he, having come back to his work from the Siberian inferno without any resources and with a number of financial burdens, should be forced to take one hundred rubles per sheet, while the other, with two thousand souls on his



Fiodor Dostoyevsky
From a portrait by Perov

estates, should get four hundred rubles, was a crying shame. The difference in their fortunes was to rankle in him for many years. It was galling to know that this flâneur was insured against want. If he himself should have no cause to worry about bread and butter for a couple of years, he knew he could write a book that would be talked of a century hence. Yet the gulf between them was not so much a matter of outward circumstances or, as Turgenev believed, even of "convictions."

The very texture of their personalities was essentially dissimilar. The whole of Dostoyevsky's passionate and perverse nature was struggling with the effort to realize God and announce Him to the people. He was a mystic and a fanatic, but in spite of his intense religious feeling, he hated his neighbors. To Turgenev, the universe was a concern run without any reference to humane or, for that matter, human values, and showing no evidence of the overlordship of even an absentee God. He was so given to doubts that he sometimes questioned his very unbelief. He was a rationalist, impatient of dogma as he was of force, and holding all things to be relative. He observed, he set down, he admired, he deprecated, he did not participate. Where there was so much in mankind to forgive, he could not hate; but it was as difficult for him to love, though he was in love often enough. Dostoyevsky saw man as a free agent, climbing spiritual peaks by an athletic act of will. To Turgenev man was a galley-slave, chained to the hard seat of necessity, and at best a stoic at the oar. The stuff of Dostoyevsky's art is a crisis of the soul; a crisis having crime as its symptom, and viewed in a transcendental light. Turgenev, on the contrary, brings to his art a serenity which leans on commonplaces, and a pathos which on occasion takes on the authority of music.

When Dostoyevsky left Turgenev's house that uncomfortable Wednesday noon, he promised himself never to cross this threshold again. The next morning at ten o'clock Turgenev called upon him —a visit which the other took as a hint that Turgenev as well wished to terminate their relations, for he knew that the couple slept until eleven and received no visitors before twelve. The Dostoyevskys remained in Baden seven weeks, but the two men met only once more, at the railroad station, and by Dostoyevsky's account they

looked at each other without bowing. Their personal association was not again resumed. Turgenev, while recognizing the significance of his junior's work, felt it a thing utterly alien to himself. He described Dostoyevsky as "the Russian Marquis de Sade" and called him "the most vicious Christian" he had ever known. The vicious Christian, for his part, bore Turgenev a lasting grudge.

During 1871–72 "The Russian Herald" was publishing "The Possessed." In this work, which took some four years to write, Dostoyevsky, whose rage was cumulative, allowed himself to caricature Turgenev in the character of Karmazinov. The object of the satire immediately recognized himself in this Russian author who railed against Russia and praised Europe, especially Germany; who courted the revolutionary youth and was ignored by them; who had such a devoted public and yet was forever laying down his pen and talking about the time when death would close his eyes; who took such tender care of his own person; who betrayed the fears and foibles, spoke with the shrill voice and moved with the mincing gait of a spoiled woman. (Turgenev's detractors disliked his walk, which looked affected, but was conditioned by the fact that his legs were too short and thin to bear the weight of his huge torso.)

The general public was not slow to discover that Karmazinov flaunted the mannerisms and the mufflers, the waistcoats and the Eau de Cologne, the Westernism and the æstheticism of the dean of Russian letters. There were a few who read into one passage a reference to Turgenev's life in Baden by the side of Pauline Viardot. And every one had a laugh over Karmazinov's remark: "I felt that this question of water-pipes in Karlsruhe was dearer and closer to my heart than all the questions of my precious Fatherland." At first reading Turgenev laughed too, and spoke of the Aristophanesque humor of the caricature. But he was for a long time indignant with the author for having represented him as fawning upon the extreme radicals because they were to inherit the earth. He did cultivate the Nihilists and the radical youth generally, but he certainly did not believe that the future lay in their hands.

Not content with ridiculing Turgenev's person, Dostoyevsky took occasion to poke fun at his literary manner, and the novel contains parodies of several of his writings, among them the piece which

originally appeared in Dostoyevsky's review. It also has a veiled allusion to the old gossip about Turgenev's youthful cowardice in shipwreck, combined with a derogatory reference to his account of a public execution, which was published the year before "The Possessed" appeared in print. On the night of January 19, 1870, Turgenev "supped full of horrors," as he wrote Annenkov. He spent it in the company of a privileged group of French journalists and men of letters at the La Roquette prison, in Paris, so as to be present at the last toilette and guillotining of a certain Traupmann, a notorious murderer who had massacred a family of eight. Turgenev agreed to go, as he told the Herzens, because refusals came so hard to him, but it was a devastating experience, and as a penance for his weakness and curiosity, he made himself write down everything he had witnessed and felt.

His discomfort began even before he reached the prison, the gamins mistaking his enormous shape for that of the executioner. Turgenev's account is a marvel of reportage. He notes every detail: the remarkable whiteness of the condemned man's beautiful hands, the childlike gesture with which he helped the guards to take off his prison shirt, the aspect of the executioner, who looked like a diplomat or a protestant minister. It seemed to this witness that every one was participating not in an act of justice, but in a murder, and that the only innocent creatures were the policemen's horses in the crowded streets outside, chewing oats in their nose-bags. What he felt chiefly was a sense of guilt, but this was wiped out by sheer terror when the two attendants jumped at the condemned, so that he fell head forward on the guillotine and his heels kicked. At that moment Turgenev turned away and for a few seconds lost consciousness. The narrative, which is a dry, straightforward, and immensely effective piece, closes: "I shall be satisfied and forgive my own misplaced curiosity, if my story will add something to the arguments of those who would abolish capital punishment, or, at least, abolish its public character."

Dostoyevsky, who himself had stood upon the scaffold awaiting execution, which he escaped only by a last-minute reprieve, was naturally infuriated by this cruelly weak conclusion. What further disgusted him was Turgenev's faint-heartedness at the final

moment, and in addition, his emphasis on his own reactions to the drama. To Dostoyevsky's way of thinking, a human being has no right to turn his eyes away from such a scene: only by taking it in, to the marrow of his bones, can he prove his spiritual maturity. And that Turgenev should consider his own peace of mind when another man was losing his head, was to Dostoyevsky abomination.

A weird piece of gossip clings to the name of Turgenev's antagonist. One version of the story found its way, some years ago, into print. According to this account, Dostoyevsky, with his usual interest in criminal cases, followed the trial of a man accused of having outraged a child, and became so obsessed by it that he gradually began to identify himself with the defendant. When the little girl left the court-room at the end of the trial, the novelist was drawn after her and made her his victim in turn. Tortured by agonies of remorse, he finally unburdened himself to a confessor, who counseled him, as penance, to avow his crime to the person whom he despised most. This tale has all the earmarks of a legend. But neither its veracity, nor its bearing upon the obscure problem of the novelist's perverse impulses is here in question. The point is that the man named in the story as having been sought out by Dostoyevsky, the man to whom he must confess his crime because he despised him most, was—Turgenev.

CHAPTER XXXI

THIRTY DEVONSHIRE PLACE

F "Smoke" was instrumental in causing the rupture between Turgenev and Dostoyevsky, the same novel was also destined to play the part of a peace offering. Since some of the argumentative passages in the book harked back to the author's discussions with Herzen, he felt that it was in order for him to send a copy of it to this antagonist. He was anxious to make up with Herzen. As he grew older, he clung more and more closely to the companions of his youth, and he was not one to allow differences of opinion to sever him from men whom, for one or another reason, he liked. In the letter which went with the book, Turgenev offered to bury the hatchet, adding that the distance between them had been reduced, since Herzen was now relegated to the ranks of the reactionaries by the younger émigrés.

The very day that he was penning this conciliatory letter, Herzen himself was writing to a friend about the novel and damning it in unprintable language. He also published a scathing note on it in his paper, which was then being issued from Geneva, where he had settled after leaving London. This did not prevent him from accepting the tender of friendship, nor yet did it cloud Turgenev's good-will. After all, the novelist wrote, they were contemporaries, and so had the surest ground for mutual understanding. The one thing that troubled his conscience, he admitted, was the fact that

his work was appearing in Katkov's "Russian Herald," a notoriously retrograde review. His excuse, which he knew to be lame, was that it was the only magazine that people read and that paid well. Herzen was willing to let conscience alone, resigning himself to their differences.

Their friendly relations were resumed with the tacit assumption that controversial matters would be avoided. Yet before long they dug up the old bone of contention. "If the Lord lets you live a hundred years, as I hope He may," Turgenev wrote on December 12, 1867, "you will die the last of the Slavophils." Could there be anything more irrelevant than the question of Russia's peculiar mission, he wondered, in an age whose real problem was the conflict between religion and science. It was in science, not in the deified People that a reasonable man must put his trust. Herzen retorted that science was powerless to save the rotting organism that was Europe. Should Germany defeat France in the war which seemed imminent, he observed with uncanny acumen, a period of material prosperity was likely to ensue, but the spiritual tone would certainly not be improved. If only the West would see that the Russian people were entering history abreast of the social revolution, which alone could save the Old World! If only the West were willing to listen to the new word that Russia, whose masses bore within them the seed of communism, was shouting at it!

Turgenev laughed at this new word. The homeopathy of civilization was, he insisted, the only cure for the ills of the social body. Everything else was quackery. And maybe even this medicine was powerless. On Christmas Day, 1867, the same sententious line of Goethe's that he had quoted to Mme. Viardot eighteen years previously came tripping to his pen: "'Man is not born to be free.'" Given freedom, he said with a prescience matching Herzen's, the Russians were bound to turn into dogmatists. Perhaps the ultimate destiny of the human species was to parallel the caste organization achieved by the bees. Certainly Varvara Petrovna's younger son was not born to be free: his conduct, generally speaking, was that of a man either led or driven.

There were not enough common interests between these contemporaries to sustain the correspondence. It lapsed shortly, to be

revived again only after an interval of two years. Herzen had just silenced "The Bell," which for some time he had been publishing in French to enlighten Western public opinion on the subject of Russia, and Turgenev wrote to say that the cessation of the paper was a good thing: "Do the French need to know the truth about anything, let alone Russia?" Herzen responded cordially enough, and in a subsequent letter went so far as to ask a favor of his correspondent, namely, to help kill the rumor that he was seeking repatriation at the price of abject repentance. He went on to say that Bakunin was treating God shabbily, and inclosed a clipping to bear out his words. The inclosure must have referred to the Alliance de la Démocratie Socialiste, just founded by Bakunin, the statutes of which opened thus: "The Alliance declares itself atheist."

So even Bakunin was not inalterable! The last time Turgenev had seen him, when they had walked together under a London moon, Bakunin had talked as though he still held the romantic faith of the old Berlin days, and had condemned Herzen for his disbelief in a personal God. Having recalled this scene in the letter which acknowledged the clipping, Turgenev went on: "Well, why not open one's eyes to the truth? But, I wonder, is such a public admission desirable? Is that the sort of thing one should tell the working-men? . . . If there 's no strong government in the universe, what will make men accept a strong government under socialism? And if they don't, what 's left of socialism?" Not that he particularly cared, because, as he concluded, he would remain "an individualist to the end."

Herzen, having removed to Paris, was now living in the French capital, in the oppressive atmosphere of the approaching European conflict, a man superannuated by his own followers, whom he despised, ignored by the strangers among whom he pitched his tent, and pursued by all manner of private troubles, of which the least was the loss of a considerable sum caused by his disposing of the United States securities he held. He could not forgive himself this step, not so much because of the money, as because he had doubted for a moment "the success of so noble a cause as the abolition of slavery. And where? In a country so healthy and so organically sound as the American Republic." Chancing to be in Paris in January,

1870, Turgenev went to see the exile for the first time in seven years, and found him, across the lunch-table, in excellent conversational form. The next day Herzen, who was a diabetic, came down with pneumonia, and it was soon clear that he would not recover.

Turgenev wrote to Annenkov that he had visited the family daily, but if Herzen's daughter is to be believed, he only looked in for a moment on January 19, the day of his departure for Baden, "in order," she says, "to make sure that the funeral would not delay him." It is certain that he did not stay to bid his dying friend a last farewell two days later and to see him buried at Père Lachaise. He avoided here what Fate, as though aware of his overpowering fear of death, had spared him in the case of Stankevich and Belinsky and his mother, the spectacle of the personal finale. He read with wet eyes the news that another old comrade was gone, and wrote sadly to Annenkov: "In Russia they will probably say that Herzen should have died earlier because he survived himself. But what do these words mean, what does our so-called activity mean, before this dumb abyss which swallows us? As though to live and keep on living were not the most important thing!"

Turgenev's last talk with Herzen must have at least touched upon the prospect of war. Like most people, he was inclined to overestimate the strength of French arms. Before he moved from his lodgings into the house he had built for himself in Baden, he joked that perhaps the first one to occupy the villa would be a general of the French army of invasion. Just about the time that he was uttering this pleasantry, the Chief of the French General Staff was remarking to Bismarck that though he loved and admired Prussia, they would have to cross swords in the end, for they were both cocks, and could not allow any one to crow better than themselves. The July day on which war was declared, Turgenev chanced to be in Berlin. Dining in a restaurant, he caught a glimpse, at the table opposite, of von Moltke, whose cool bearing and professorial brow strongly impressed him, and raised his hopes of a German victory. Turgenev was then on his way from Russia to Baden, and when he reached his destination he found the inhabitants trembling in expectation of the arrival of the Turcos, and the transient popula-

tion gone—in short, what Clara Schumann describes in her journal as "a city of the dead."

Weeks of anxiety followed. He set down some of his observations and opinions in a series of five letters which he contributed to a Petersburg daily. Napoleon's generals, he thought, were worse than those of Nicholas in the Crimean War, and the French were too vain and hypocritical to profit by their mistakes. Without any malice he hoped that they would get the lesson they sorely needed. He noted how sober and intelligent the German press was, in contrast with the ferocity and jingoism of the French. These people did not care for truth, even in literature: they had no Gogol, no Thackeray, and they ignored Flaubert. The church bells announced the news of Sedan, and a republic was declared in France. Lying in bed at night, he heard through the closed windows the faint booming of the guns that were bombarding the half-burned city of Strasburg, and thought wearily that he was living in an age of barbarism. Metz fell and Paris was besieged. Bazaine's surrender was puctuated by the collapse of a chimney on Turgenev's villa, and he recalled that when he had criticized it in the building, the architect had proudly declared: "These chimneys are as solid as France."

In September he was writing to his friend Pietsch: "We work for the wounded, we have music, we read, and so the hours pass. The fall of the French Empire was a great satisfaction to poor Viardot. Now his heart is bleeding. As for me, I am, as you well know, wholly pro-German. The victory of France would have meant an end to liberty. Only, you should n't have burnt Strasburg." He wrote to more than one friend to say how much the fall of "the abominable empire" rejoiced him. To Pietsch, for example, he said: "But to have lived to see that wretched scoundrel [Napoleon III] finally thrown with his whole clique into the sewer, —that 's true happiness! Why is the fellow treated with so much respect? To be fed to the lice in Cayenne—that 's what he deserves." Turgenev believed that he was witnessing the re-casting of the star rôle in history: it was passing from the Latin to the Teutonic race.

He had been delighted to see what decent treatment had been accorded the French families in Baden, as well as the prisoners of

war whom he had watched marching in endless columns along the road to Rastadt. The one disturbing thought was the "greed of conquest" which was sweeping over the Germans. He identified their victory with the triumph of science and civilization, but he hated to see them take Paris: such an achievement could only demoralize the victor. The fall of the empire left him still on the side of the Germans, although the very fact that they were conquerors slightly alienated his affections: aggression chilled his sympathies. As a child he had learned to hate the domineering temper, and in his work, as in his human contacts, he registered his aversion from it. Besides, as he wrote to Annenkov, he could hardly approve Germany's desire to saddle itself with another Poland: the Alsatians had become completely French, just as the Pomeranians, once Slavs, were now Prussians, and there was no reversing the process of history. Referring to Germany's annexationist appetite, he wrote to Paul Heyse: "I am bewildered, and fear that I shall soon cease to recognize my once beloved Germans."

His strong sympathies did not save him from the uncomfortable sense of being, as usual, an onlooker. "These days," he was writing to Theodor Storm in October, 1870, "it 's a queer thing to be neither a German nor a Frenchman. You cannot help, and at the same time you are hindered in your own work. You become a spectator from head to foot, and that 's not always pleasant." He felt that even if one side is right, war is a barbarous thing, and just then it looked to him as though mankind would never outgrow the iron age. When the disastrous peace came, he pitied "poor France." Yet the course and conclusion of the war did not alter his original opinion of it. In 1872 Annenkov wrote to him that if the Germans "like a polite nation, had allowed themselves to be beaten, it would be simply impossible to live in Europe." To which Turgenev replied that this was perfectly true.

The war deprived the Viardots of their income. For once Turgenev could extend to them the assistance which they had several times given him. He was enabled to do so by disposing of some land, and he also used his good offices in the matter of the sale of a Rembrandt, owned by the Viardots, to the Grand-Duchess Yelena Pavlovna. Foeth threw out the suggestion that the whole contin-

gent should translate itself to Spasskoye and live there off the fat of the land. But this extreme expedient was unnecessary: there was still a place where Mme. Viardot could get as much as twenty-five francs a lesson. That was England. And so in October, 1870, the family went to London, and a fortnight later Turgenev joined them. He had been telling every one that he was going to remain in Baden, even if the French came. There was no evidence of epidemics, and living had actually become somewhat cheaper. But when his friends left, how could he remain behind?

The Viardots lodged at 30 Devonshire Place, and Turgenev always managed to be near them, living at one time at 4 Bentinck Street, a few doors from where Gibbon had written a great part of "The Decline and Fall," and later at 16 Beaumont Street. But even with the sea between him and the troubled continental scene, he had little peace. There were moments when it seemed to him that the Franco-Prussian War was merely a match to touch off the general European conflict which had been feared for so long. "What will then become of civilization and freedom?" he asked. "If only Russia keeps out!"

This was the first time that he had come to England for more than a flying visit. He found the life there "joyless but curious." Even the most intelligent English, he wrote to Flaubert, led a hard life; one must adapt oneself to it as to their climate. "No Englishman," he observed to another friend, "has the slightest suspicion as to what art is; that 's an incontrovertible axiom." He complained of the post-office, declaring that more of his letters and telegrams were lost during the winter in England than throughout the rest of his life. In later years he confided to Henry James some of his impressions of that "lugubrious" period, mentioning particularly "a visit to a 'bishopess' surrounded by her daughters, and . . . the cookery at the lodgings which he occupied." He was impressed, and somewhat dismayed, by the constant activity of these English, so different from the leisurely ways of Moscow and Petersburg. He was struck, too, by their phenomenal poise. Just before the downfall of the Commune and the fires in Paris, he was visiting Cambridge and dined at Trinity. That same evening a debate was to take place at the Union on the question: Do the French Communards deserve the sympa-

thy of Englishmen? "Turgenev was so anxious to hear the debate and witness the stormy scene," one of his companions wrote, "that he kept asking if it was n't time to start. After having observed with what calm and respectful attention the young men who crowded the hall listened to the arguments and voted all but unanimously dead against the motion, Turgenev turned to me and said, 'Now at last I understand why you English are n't afraid of a revolution.' "

The old Viardot's dejection weighed down Turgenev's naturally low spirits, and he was the prey of uncertainty simply because the family's plans were in the air. One of the drawbacks to London was that Mme. Viardot was so often absent from the city on her concert tours. She had an established audience throughout the provinces, having appeared there annually during the decade of 1848–58. Turgenev too had to interrupt his stay in London, much to his distress. Stopping overnight in Baden, on his way to Russia, he prepares to go to bed with the feeling of being "an apparition" in his own room. He wonders how he can be here, "body and bones," and not at Devonshire Place. "I said 'body and bones,' " he writes to Mme. Viardot, "because I know where my soul is. All the time I am asking myself what they are doing there in London; I see you, see Didie, Marianne, Viardot, Paul; one more effort and I shall hear your voices."

He remained in London with the Viardots through the spring of 1871, while civil war was raging in France. In July the family went to Boulogne for the sea bathing. Turgenev took them there, and then crossed the channel again to be present at the Walter Scott centennial which was being celebrated in Edinburgh on August 9. There was a pageant of Scott's characters through the hot sunlit streets, and then a frugal banquet of wine, fruit, and cake in the glass-roofed hall of the Corn Exchange. According to the account in "The Scotsman" the next day, "the noble Chairman," the Lord of Dalkeith, proposed the health of the visitors among whom there was an American, Dr. Beets, and "Mr. Torqueneff [*sic*], a distinguished Russian novelist." "Mr. Torqueneff" had learned by heart the speech which he had prepared with the aid of an English friend, and, as he wrote to Foeth, only stumbled once, thereby winning a

TURGENEV IN 1871
From a drawing by Ludwig Pietsch

round of applause. "All of our best writers," he said, among other things, "have been sincere admirers, some of them have been imitators of your great master of romance."

From Edinburgh he traveled to the Highlands, to shoot grouse. The weather was fine and so was the breakfast on the moors, but the sport was rather monotonous and very strenuous: at the end of the first day, spent in the company of an athletic native, he was ready to cry with fatigue. He preferred, he wrote to Mme. Viardot, hunting around Baden, where one is not attached to "a madman with the legs of a deer, who shouts, 'Come on, come on,' every time you stop to draw a breath." It was a joy to breathe the air of northern Scotland, than which, he thought, there was nothing finer in the world; but the company, like the grouse-shooting, was wearisome, and this though it included a vigorous, white-bearded man with a strident voice and a hand-shake like an electric shock, who answered to the name of Robert Browning. The English poet was staying with his friends the Benzons, at Little Milton, in the hills above Loch Tummel, at the time when Turgenev was dating his letters Allan House, Pitlochry, a village near by. The poet failed to make an impression upon him. "Mr. Browning came again last night," he wrote to Mme. Viardot on August 13. "He seemed dull to me, but I was so sleepy with fatigue, I could hardly keep on my feet." That was all he found to say of the author of "The Ring and the Book."

Although Turgenev injured his foot his first day out hunting, he was too much of a sportsman not to try again. The second time he was on horseback and had other companions. "I was with Mr. Benzon, who," he wrote to Mme. Viardot, "reminds one less of a hunter than of a marmot, and Mr. Browning's son, who wishes to look like one (a hunter, not a marmot), but is nevertheless merely an insignificant little simpleton, with a perpetually red wart on his nose." In the evening there was music, and "Mrs. Benzon," Turgenev remarks uncharitably, "squeaked Schubert and Schumann *Lieder,* with a false voice and true feeling." He was, however, pleased by the memories that the singing called up.

Browning had just then published "Balaustion's Adventure," which includes a translation from Euripides, and was at pains to

go over from Little Milton to Tummel Bridge to see Jowett, and consult with him about the rendering of a Greek phrase. Stopping with Jowett at that time was Algernon Charles Swinburne. There is no indication that Turgenev met him then, but it is noteworthy that Swinburne was the only one of the literary men of the period who won a good word from him. He wrote to Foeth that he would tell him when they got together about the most recent English poetry, of which no one, or virtually no one, in Russia had any idea. "The subject is not agreeable, but interesting, and there is a very great lyrical talent: Swinburne." Earlier in the year he had commented to a Moscow audience on the degeneration of English literary taste, especially in poetry. "The English," he said, "are now admiring the verse of Rossetti, a most insignifiant person, without any gift to speak of." Over a twelvemonth later he was writing on the same subject in the same terms to another compatriot, himself a writer of verse: "The newest English poets, all these Rossettis, etc., are dreadfully affected; in Swinburne alone there are flashes of indubitable talent. He is an imitator of Victor Hugo, but he has true passion and fire, while in Hugo all this is invented. Get his 'Songs Before Sunrise.'"

If Turgenev was out of sympathy with the trend of literature in England, he was not much better satisfied with what the young writers in Russia were doing. They were proud of their lack of invention, believing that this gave them a better purchase on the truth. They did not understand that if art needs truth as a plant needs air, like the plant it cannot live on air alone. He found their work without grace and without strength, smelling, so he said, of trouser-bottoms, but he followed it patiently. In 1871, as the previous year, he went home for a refreshing dip in native waters, and though, as he observed, some of the waves were muddy, he was glad, on the whole, of having done so. At the same time he felt himself a stranger at home. Commenting on Anton Rubinstein's effort to form a club which would unite the artistic and literary intelligences of Petersburg, Turgenev predicted to Mme. Viardot, and was borne out by the event, that nothing would come of it. "Besides," he added, "this doesn't concern me, because I don't live in Russia. . . ." He went on to say, in a tone to which he had long since

accustomed her: "The Petersburg whirl into which I fell and from which I intend to withdraw very speedily does not for a minute let me forget either London, or my return, or all I love in the world—now more than ever. I shall be happy only when I cross the threshold of 30 Devonshire Place."

CHAPTER XXXII

"WHEN YOU 'RE OLD . . ."

LEAVING their Baden home in the midst of the war, the Viardots did not wind up their affairs there. The summer of 1871 they returned to settle matters by disposing of their property. Turgenev joined them there after his prolonged week-end in Scotland, only to be put on his back by an attack of gout. It was a dreary autumn for him, what with the selling of his nest to a Moscow banker, the trials incidental to moving, being ill in dismantled rooms, and his lonely fifty-third birthday, with Mme. Viardot in Paris, and himself left in charge of the young people. It was certainly a down-hill plunge now, he was writing to Pietsch in November: "The brake! The brake! For the love of God!" What a pleasure—and a contrast—it had been, three months before, to see Mme. Viardot celebrating her fiftieth birthday—he never missed these anniversaries—in the best of health and the highest spirits!

Mme. Viardot was in the French capital now with her husband, looking for a suitable house, since they had decided to settle in what was left of that much battered city. After all, France, as George Sand had once written to Viardot, was something to come back to, if only to measure the changes in one's own life by the transformation the country had undergone. Their decision automatically fixed Turgenev's place of residence. Where else should he rest his

gouty old carcass? "If the family moved to Australia," he confessed, "I would follow them there." By the end of November they were all reunited at rue de Douai, 48, in the Montmartre section.

It was with no particular pleasure that he went to make his home in the French capital. His visits to the prosperous Paris of Napoleon III had always left a bad taste in his mouth. He had found the many new houses, one uglier than the other. The freshly ornamented façade of the Grand Opéra had looked to him like "the dream of a cocotte." The opera itself had degenerated. The streets had seemed to be full of repulsive people with dirty faces. The unhappy atmosphere of the Paris to which he now came was not calculated to make him any more comfortable. Every one, including Thiers himself, despised the Republic, and yet saw no way to anything better. The hatred of the Germans was colossal; "the only colossal thing there is here," Turgenev wrote.

In the beginning the immediate concern of getting settled in the new home and the writing he had in hand, took his mind off the political situation. A visitor found him engrossed with the weighty business of placing the furniture and choosing the portières and curtains. He was frequently seen with rolls of fabric under his arm, on his way to or from the upholsterer's, or traveling through the shopping district. One guesses that the family took advantage of the leisured and obliging man. His three rooms—bedroom, study, and library—had not been designed for a giant, and the modest apartment was rather stuffy, being, to Alphonse Daudet's eye at least, as "crowded as a boudoir." His green den contained the inevitable divan, toward which he naturally gravitated, and among other things on the walls were a Rousseau landscape and a Corot, while between the windows hung a marble bas-relief of Pauline Viardot in profile, and beneath it also in marble a sculpture of her exquisite hand.

For a decade these rooms saw a multitude of foreign faces, mostly young, and often troubled. Penniless Russian students came to ask if the great novelist could not find work for them. He claimed that the shabby arm-chair in his study had been worn out by his unemployed compatriots. He penned endless letters of recommendation; he had, so he said, a gift for this kind of writing. He

arranged, with the aid of Mme. Viardot, musical matinées for their benefit. As often as not he dug into his own pocket. His generosity was a byword: it rained upon deserving and undeserving alike. One petitioner suggested in a letter that the novelist spend a day or two on a story for a magazine which was offering a prize, and since he would surely win it, send the cash to the letter-writer, who was in need. Turgenev did not write the story, but he did look up the beggar and gave him money. Sometimes he took pleasure in playing the Paraclete. He would send a sick girl to a medical celebrity for treatment, and assuring her that the fee was a small one, quietly foot the large bill. Toward the end, when he was mortally ill, he arranged a "sad little comedy" to assist a fellow-countryman who was too proud to accept the help he desperately needed. Turgenev sent a story which the man had translated to a Russian editor, and begged him to write a letter of acceptance stating that he was remitting two hundred francs as advance payment, though the money was really to come out of Turgenev's purse.

He was never without a special favorite whom he kept under his wing. He would listen to young men ardently urging upon him the imminence of the revolution, and looking quite placid in his gray Caucasian jacket with red lapels, he would furnish a quiet interlude by telling irrelevant if exquisite anecdotes. He was at the mercy of all manner of people who unloaded their troubles on his big shoulders. Women came to ask for an introduction to Mme. Viardot, for help in securing entrée to the theatrical world, in bringing a debtor to terms, in getting rid of a bad husband. He acted as Secretary of the Paris Club of Russian Artists, arranged for exhibitions of their work, followed up Mme. Viardot's Russian pupils. Indeed, it was said that there was hardly a fellow-countryman of his in Paris who had anything to do with writing, painting, or music, who did n't, at one time or another, get help from this "ambassador of the Russian intelligentsia," as he came to be called. Of course, would-be authors flocked for advice and assistance. He offered them money, took their manuscripts, read them, entered into correspondence with possible publishers, and even with the aspirant's friends and relatives. He never had the courage to tell a hopeful writer that his work was worthless, and there was always a crow

or two that he was hailing as a peacock. Years previously, a wag, making a collection of facetious dream interpretations, had set down that to see Turgenev in a dream signified that one had the subtle ability to dig up a talent where none existed.

He was, and enjoyed being, father confessor, mentor, guide, and friend. In a sense these protégés and postulants were closer to him than his own "family," for unlike the Viardots, these people, being Russians themselves, were interested in the same matters and excited by the same problems that agitated him. His visitors were in the way of being a substitute, however poor, for Russia. He scrutinized them closely, sometimes to their displeasure, as if to test the accusation so often leveled at him that he was ignorant of the younger generation. Of course, he was also examining them with the eye of a novelist. He was lavish of warnings against following his own bad example of expatriation, with its attendant loss of the native milieu, of social ties and obligations, of an activity of a definite sort. "I was better fitted than you for life abroad," he told one of his young friends, "and even I vegetate here and keep waiting for something, knowing that I have nothing to wait for any more."

His callers, on their way upstairs, often overheard the sound of the piano or the voice of one of Mme. Viardot's pupils. Her music-room was directly under Turgenev's study, a circumstance in which he rejoiced, though a jealous compatriot interpreted it as another instance of the neglect he was suffering. Indeed, he had a special speaking-tube installed so that he could hear the music more distinctly. He dined below-stairs, and after dinner they would all gather around the fireplace, where, falling into a doze, "Tourguel," as the girls called him, would wake to the sound of a duo or a quartet. To all intents and purposes he was as completely identified with the family as old Viardot himself. He went back to Vergil and Ovid, partly because he loved the classics, but chiefly to help Paul with his Latin. He watched with paternal solicitude the progress of Didie's affair with young Georges Chamerot, which ended in her betrothal to him. Turgenev considered him "a splendid, capable, high-minded fellow"; otherwise, he told Pietsch, he would never have consented to the match. "I have never seen anything more charming," he wrote of the pair. "All of us, so-called writers, are blind

botchers and bunglers in these things. Fortunately, I don't write any more, so I am saved from the temptation of trying to reproduce this spectacle. . . . But I am swallowing everything, everything." He told Foeth that the young man was wholly admirable, but could not say that he was worthy of Claudie, for in his eyes, no man was that. The happiness that the young couple radiated was something to thank God for, but he could n't feel truly grateful to a Providence that would not restore his own youth; and all else was "dust and vanity." In good time came the anxious days preceding Didie's confinement, and the grandfatherly joy in the little Jeanne Edmée—the baby, like his own granddaughter, being named for him.

A regular feature of his life on rue de Douai was Mme. Viardot's Thursdays and Sundays. George Sand has described one of these Thursday musicales given soon after her darling Pauline moved to Paris: the bare simple room, furnished only with a piano and chairs; the great jars of poppies and cornflowers on the steps leading up to the adjacent picture-gallery with its organ; the violin-playing of young Paul, and the singing of Claudie and Marianne to their mother's accompaniment; and the miracle of that voice which she had not heard for twenty years, and which, carrying the melodies of Gluck, had the power to obliterate for a moment the smoking ruins of France, the miseries of the present and the uncertainties of the future. Flaubert, too, when he heard Mme. Viardot singing Gluck, declared that the emotions her art aroused consoled one for the malignity of life. What Flaubert was saying, his friend Turgenev must not seldom have felt. One of his "Poems in Prose," dated 1879, celebrates the triumphant moment when, her last note uttered, she stands transfigured by the beauty she has just expressed, and becomes, although but a handful of dust, the radiant incarnation of immortality. His admiration for the artist altered less with the years than his passion for the woman.

She continued to delight her friends, and occasionally even the general public, when there was only one octave left to her voice. Thus, as late as 1876, beginning somewhat rustily, she yet made her audience shudder as, rubbing together her perfect white hands, she sang to Verdi's music, Shakspere's words: "All the perfumes of

Arabia will not sweeten this little hand." The same evening she showed her versatility by singing "Erlkönig," with Saint-Saens at the piano, and then, with a Spanish tenor who was present, doing a comic love-duet. At fifty-five, in spite of her bulging, near-sighted eyes, thick lips, and bad figure, this supple-bodied woman in the black-lace gown exercised over the guests seated on her white-lacquered, silk-upholstered chairs a spell that put into eclipse her two young daughters.

The Sundays were less serious occasions, what with charades, games of forfeits, and other parlor amusements. Turgenev, who had always relished this sort of thing, Saint-Saens, and Paul Viardot were the principal actors. On one occasion Turgenev took the part of a professor of medicine, while the musician, in pink tights, was the corpse, and at the grand finale Paul, the chief machinist, held up a white china plate to represent the moon. Fat old Renan, with his paunch on his right side, was made to jump over a handkerchief, to the great glee of the company, especially "the perfidious young." Again, he powdered his vast face all over, trying with his lips to lift a ring from the top of a flour pyramid. Turgenev's first impulse, when in 1868 he was offered an introduction to this "exquisite seminarist," as he called Renan, had been to decline it. Was it that he felt an instinctive dislike for the man who was to pronounce the funeral oration over his body?

The apartment on the rue de Douai was Turgenev's winter quarters. The first summer away from Baden he spent partly at home in Russia, partly with the Viardots in the country, at Valéry-sur-Somme. The following year he summered with them in a suburb of Paris, Bougival. There was everything to recommend the place: it was within forty-five minutes of the city; it was pleasantly situated on a forested hill overlooking the Seine; and—cholera had never been known there! And so in 1874 Turgenev, in partnership with Viardot, purchased a fine property there at the price of one hundred and eighty thousand francs. There was some suggestion of a Russian manorial estate about Les Frênes. The place was so called because of the ash-trees surrounding the house. Turgenev would have found a melancholy propriety in the fact that his last home should be named for the tree of whose wood his coffin was to be made.

With its spacious grounds, its springing fountains, its moss-covered statues, its river-view, this was an estate fit for gentlemen. Thirty paces from the main house, he built himself a comfortable chalet in the Swiss style, but with incongruous ornaments intended to remind the owner of his far-away Scythia. The last tile was placed on the roof in 1875, but he did not move in until the spring of the next year.

In the half-dozen summers that remained to him, Les Frênes was the counterpart of his Baden nest. There were the same faces, the same domestic diversions, the same sporadic, half-acknowledged unease. Mme. Viardot's married children summered there, too, and the whole family would gather as of old around the lunch-table, to which the samovar was regularly brought, the one Russian feature in Turgenev's French home. In the afternoon they would fill his study, which was on the second floor and furnished richly in crimson and black, Mme. Viardot with some hand-work, Claudie at her easel in the big bow-window, Louise reading aloud from some French or English book, and he at his desk over his correspondence, interrupting now and then, only to have Marianne's fingers close up his mouth: "See here, Tourguel, we want to listen!" On Sundays there was always music, with Mme. Viardot at the piano in the drawing-room.

These companioned hours were matched by many lonely ones of lying abed with the gout. The disease played with him, he complained, like a cat with a mouse. At any moment it was ready to pounce on him and send his best-laid schemes a-gley. "Man proposes," he paraphrased the old proverb, "and Gout disposes." The very first year in Paris was particularly trying in this respect. On his fifty-fourth anniversary he suffered the twelfth spell in six months, and cursed the day of his birth. His visits home usually ended in an attack, and it was Mme. Viardot's contention, with which he agreed, that the famous Russian hospitality was to blame. He suffered cruelly in 1877 and 1878, but thereafter he was able to lay his crutches aside, and actually mounted a horse—Didie maintaining that he looked like a retired Württemberg general. As in Baden, except for these attacks, he enjoyed fairly good health. At the age of sixty he was able to enjoy hunting, although his pulse was

no longer one hundred and eighty when he saw his hound pointing. Two or three times he crossed the channel to shoot partridge on the estate of a friend who boasted the best preserves in Engand, although confessing that it was rather shameful for such an old fellow as he to go to all that trouble, merely to riddle poor birds with lead. He complained that he was hard put to it to follow the sport in France, because he had neither dogs nor legs, and besides, only millionaires could engage in hunting there.

He was farther than ever from being a millionaire. Sometimes he was in severe straits. When he reached Petersburg in 1876, for example, he had to borrow a hundred rubles to get to Spasskoye. He was sure of about seven thousand rubles annually from the sale of his books, and he eked out his income by selling pieces of land. His estates brought him relatively little; Kiszinski, the manager whom he had instated with so much difficulty, was no improvement on poor Uncle Nicholas. When Turgenev asked his advice on important matters, the only thing he did was to wag his magnificent beard and show his false teeth. If the man had at least been honest! Turgenev had been foolish enough to trust him for nearly ten years, but his eyes were opened when a large sum of money vanished, obviously into Kiszinski's pocket. On June 3, 1876, Turgenev wrote from Moscow that he had decided to effect a coup d'état and "overthrow this Abd-ul-Aziz"—the deposition of the sultan was then the topic of the day. He kept his word, and when the ordeal was over, went to his study and watched from a window the carts being loaded with the rogue's belongings, preparatory to his departure. Among the goods the master of Spasskoye recognized some of his own possessions, but made no attempt to interfere. Only when the caravan was on the road, he dashed out, shook his fist at it, cursed the thief vigorously, and having thus relieved his feelings, went in to write his ladies, in his best humorous vein, an account of the proceedings.

He appointed a new manager, and leased him Spasskoye for a period of twelve years, retaining the privilege of selling it. Thanks to Kiszinski's depredations, he was, he wrote, "a ruined man." "Virgin Soil," which appeared the next year, brought in several thousand rubles, but then came the war and a lowered rate of ex-

change. After 1877 he did so little writing that his literary income came almost entirely from his previously published works. Coincident with the Russo-Turkish conflict came private financial reverses which seriously affected him. He had finally to recognize that he had misjudged his son-in-law as generously as he had his manager. Gaston Bruère was a bad egg. He had sunk all of his wife's dowry in his factory, and now he was threatened by bankruptcy. To avert the disaster Turgenev got himself into debt, but succeeded only in postponing the failure. Meanwhile he was giving his daughter an annual pension of five thousand francs. The worst of it was that Bruère was as poor a husband as he was a business man. He drank heavily, and even menaced his wife with a revolver. In the end Turgenev had to help her to run away from the fellow, and she, with her two children, remained a charge upon him to the last. Being in hiding from her husband, she was unable to come to her father's death-bed, but the bankrupt glass manufacturer turned up promptly to put in a bid for the inheritance.

One of Turgenev's creditors was his own brother, to whom he owed fifteen thousand rubles and was paying nine per cent. interest. Nicholas had taken to augmenting his large fortune by usury. In 1878, Turgenev found himself unable to make payment, and offered Nicholas one of his canvases instead. The usurer refused the substitute, and Turgenev, what with other monetary difficulties, was forced to put on the market his collection of pictures. Since his settlement in Paris he had developed the collector's hobby. He declared that he was known at the auction rooms as *"le grand gogo russe,"* the great Russian sucker. He owned forty-eight canvases, nearly one third of them old masters, including a fine Teniers; and among the landscapes, of which he had many, the productions of the Barbizon school figured largely. He sold the lot at a great loss. Antokolsky, the sculptor, who came in to see him the day after the first sale, which took place April 20, 1878, found him sprawling on his ugly green rep divan, and repeating dejectedly, "What a Waterloo! What a Waterloo!" He had foreseen the loss; the same thing had happened when he sold his villa. But, as he wrote to his brother, his one consolation was that he was now too old to make many more mistakes.

That year he turned sixty. He who had cried wolf so many times needlessly, now had the wolf at his throat. There were moments, rare enough, when he could find an ambiguous virtue in old age: it simplified life, and, when neither gout nor spleen tormented him, he had hours of feeling reasonably well off. But if he had had his periodic depressions before this, he was now come to a time when, like Prospero's, his every third thought was his grave. The letters to his intimates abound in half humorous and often wholly pathetic lamentations. He is going down-hill: there she waits, the blind, dumb, gray, cold, stupid, voracious, eternal Night. Why should he regret the disarrangement of his plans by illness? That feeling does not befit the dead. He hopes his correspondent will remember kindly the cadaver named Turgenev. He is an overripe fruit, hanging heavily on its rotten branch. His mood is gray, with yellowish spots. He is swinging like a pendulum between aversion from life and fear of death. An American reviewer calls him a genius; pshaw! he would give up, not only his own reputation, such as it is, but the fame of a real genius, to have a few weeks of foolish youth again, and spend them hunting partridge, ten hours on end. He quotes, in a letter, an entry from his diary:

> March 17, 1877; midnight. I am again at my desk and a darkness blacker than night pervades my spirit. . . . It is as though the grave were hastening to swallow me. The day, empty, aimless, colorless, flits by like a moment. Before you know it, you're falling into bed again. I have neither the right nor the desire to live, there is nothing more to do, nothing to expect, nothing to wish for.

He is cooling and growing a film, like a pot of rendered fat placed out in the frost. He would be glad of any excitement, but the spirit cannot be aroused any more. Strange, when you're old, life goes so much faster. But you get nothing done, and there's really nothing to do. In old age one feels the thorns of the rose one picked—or didn't pick—when one was young. One draws on one's patience, a bitter herb, which heals as little as all the other medicines.

CHAPTER XXXIII

THE LAST WORK

COMING to Paris to stay, in the late autumn of 1871, Turgenev brought with him the manuscript of his short novel "Spring Freshets," completed except for minor details. He had managed to write the piece between trains, as it were, and in spite of the miseries of moving. Annenkov, to whom, as a matter of course, the manuscript went first for criticism, wrote back enthusiastically that his friend was still at the "zenith" of his creative powers. Thus sanctioned, the novel, like several sketches which had preceded it, made its appearance in the great liberal review, "The Herald of Europe," (*Vestnik Yevropy*) to which Turgenev had transferred his allegiance when "The Russian Herald" grew too reactionary.

When he had transcribed the novel,—the clean copy was always in his own hand,—he made, as he wrote to the editor, a surprising discovery: he had thought of his work as full of blue sky and the song of larks, but it proved to be a poisonous toadstool. "So immoral," he said, "I have never been." He repeated this self-accusation in a letter to Pietsch. The reference was to the fact that his hero could appreciate stainless beauty and betray it ignominiously by yielding to lust. The situation here parallels that of "Smoke," only the man is younger, his bride is not a plain Russian girl but a ravishing Italian maiden, and instead of resisting the scarlet woman

after a momentary lapse, he trails after his siren, no less shameful than her other lovers or than the gluttonous husband whom she amuses with her conquests. The remark of Potugin in "Smoke": "Man is weak, woman is strong, Chance is all-powerful," is better exemplified in "Spring Freshets" than in any of Turgenev's other novels.

Annenkov suggested that Sanin, the central character, should have been made to run away from both women, horrified and puzzled by himself, so as to counteract the impression that he is capable of "savoring divine ambrosia and devouring raw meat like a Kalmuck." And after publication, the author wrote that he was disgusted with his production: if he had only considered it before it went into print, he would at least have altered the end, have had Sanin flee his enchantress, have allowed him another interview with Gemma, his bride, would have had her reject him, and so forth. But now he was done with it, and he was not going to touch his abortion again. As a matter of fact, he need have had no qualms about the ethical import of his story: if it conveys any lesson at all, it is that the wages of sin is death—death not of the body, but of the spiritual member.

One may put aside Annenkov's scruples as to the moral implications of the tale, but one agrees whole-heartedly with his admiration for it as a piece of writing. The characters live—not only the weak-willed Sanin, and the woman who seduces him, but also the girl's mother, and the excellent Pantaleone, old friend and servant and majordomo of the little Italian household, as well as the German shopman who is the epitome of Philistinism. Through this character Turgenev was working off a grudge against the fatuousness of post-war Germany. Gemma, like so many of his enchanting virgins, is perhaps too much the incarnation of man's wistful dream to be quite human.

The story, Turgenev confessed, was based in part on a sentimental episode of his early manhood, when, passing through Frankfort in 1840, he was smitten by a beautiful Jewish girl. However that may be, the impulse that worked itself out in the tale was clearly an effort to recapture the spirit of youth. Life to him was like one of those fruits of Oriental legend, "all sweetness on one side,

all bitterness on the other." And as he munched, wry-faced, the bitter half that was age, he kept trying to recall the taste of the sweet half that had been consumed.

"Spring Freshets" is related as the reminiscence of a middle-aged man who, at two o'clock in the morning, after an evening spent with charming women and distinguished men, flings himself into his arm-chair and covers his face with his hands, overcome by a disgust with life. If this lonely man stretched beside his empty fireplace and meditating on "the vanity, the uselessness, the stale falsity of everything human," on the suddenness of old age, on the gnawing fear of death—if this man were to take his hands from his face, would he not uncover the very features of his creator? And this image of the sea of life, smooth and transparent "even to its very dark bottom," this sea on which a man floats in a small cranky boat, while "on that dark slimy bottom horrible monsters, like huge fishes, are dimly visible,—all the ills of life, sicknesses, woes, madness, poverty, blindness . . .", monsters that move, and rise, and threaten, and sink again, barely moving their gills, only biding their time till one of them shall inevitably "capsize the boat," —does not this image convey the essence of Turgenev's private laments?

The novel had a tremendous success, especially with women. The issue of the magazine in which it appeared went into a second printing, an unheard-of thing. But all this did not hearten the writer. For one thing, the critics, finding in the novel no food for their homiletics, were inclined to dismiss it as light literature. Their dissatisfaction with the work because of its lack of social import, was in a sense an indirect reproach to the expatriate for exiling himself from the scene which it was his duty to represent. Turgenev was all too ready to admit that this reproach was justified, although occasionally he protested that it was the novelist's right to treat purely psychological themes.

In the years that followed, he published very little. What could he write about? He had once spoken of his Muse as a hen which he must summon coaxingly with "Here, chick, chick, chick." Just now the hen was shy; or, to change the metaphor, there was "rust on the wheels." He confessed in March, 1873, that if it had n't

been for promises he had made to two editors, he would joyfully have thrown down his pen. "And, of course," he added, "once these obligations are discharged, I shall never touch my pen again. Here is my solemn oath on it." It would be a pleasure to watch the literary scene with the serenity of one who had retired. Of course, his literary impulse was not dead, but it was certainly dormant. Such writing as he did was done under compulsion. When there was no demand for his rye, the remittance in payment for some tale or other was welcome. At a loss for suitable subjects, he found himself rummaging in his portfolios and turning up yellow sheets which contained drafts jotted down at least a quarter of a century earlier. Most of these notes had gone to the making of "A Sportsman's Sketches." But some of the material which had remained unused looked as though it could be put in shape for publication. By September, 1872, he had turned out a sequel ("The End of Chertophkhanov") to one of these sketches, and was planning to salvage four more pieces. In two minds as to the wisdom of such a step, he put the matter up to Annenkov: should he write them or not?

Annenkov said no. "A Sportman's Sketches" was not only a mile-stone in the career of its author, but also a monument to a completed phase of Russian culture, and it would be vandalism to tamper with the book at this date. "On the anniversary of the Poltava victory," he wrote, "Peter wore his old bullet-ridden hat, but he did n't deck it out with peacock feathers." Turgenev replied by cheerfully quoting Julian the Apostate, "Thou hast conquered, Galilean," and decided to leave well enough alone. In 1874 he did augment "A Sportsman's Sketches" by one more tale, the little classic, "Living Relics." This sketch, which immediately on publication brought Turgenev congratulatory letters from George Sand and Flaubert, he had originally put aside as too dull to waste time on.

About the same time he wrote a reminiscential piece, "Punin and Baburin," the psychological interest of which outweighs its significance as a document of social history, and more than a year elapsed before he offered his public another short narrative, "The Watch," a study in adolescence. When he sent this story to the

editor of "The Herald of Europe," he stipulated, with that lack of self-assurance which he never outgrew, that should the piece be found wanting in merit, it should be consigned to the flames. He hoped that the critics would not say, "Mr. Turgenev's watch is slow: he still imagines himself a writer!" It was quite in character for him to concede on occasion that he was in truth no writer. All his life, he said, he had spent with people who took no interest in his work; his nearest and dearest did n't even know the language in which he wrote; for months, for years, he would forget that he had any business with a pen.

He might deny the writer in himself as often as the cock crew, but his literary instinct was as strong as ever. Nor, in spite of his residence abroad, had he resigned the function of the author who, in tracing the lives of his characters, fills out the wider contours of the contemporary scene, the writer who seeks to show the very age and body of his time, its form and pressure—in short, the function of historian to his day. As early as the winter of 1872, he confessed that he had "the subject and plan of a novel all ready." He meant a large ambitious work which would face the issues of the age. Two of his twelve characters had "not been sufficiently studied on the spot," were "not caught alive." He could n't rely on his invention. He must make at least temporary visits to Russia, to "saturate" himself with his material. "But will these visits be sufficient?" he asked. "My literary conscience will tell me that. If so, I 'll write the novel, if not—amen!" His trip to Russia in the summer of 1874 was in the nature of an exploring expedition, and he was able to send Flaubert news "from the depths of Scythia," as that confrère put it, that he had "found the information" for the book he was planning.

That very summer something odd and unprecedented was taking place in a thousand Russian villages. Young people disguised as farm-hands, artisans, nurses, were traveling from one rural community to another, leaving in their wake subversive tracts, memories of unexpected kindnesses, and a good deal of queer talk. Before this year there had been only sporadic efforts to carry the new evangel of revolution to the masses. But this year was marked by a veritable crusade. It was in many respects a children's crusade.

These evangelists were little more than boys and girls, possessed by a religious faith in the immediate advent of the social revolution, and betrayed by their naïveté and lack of organization. They left lecture-halls and ball-rooms behind them, they gave up army commissions and estates, to learn a trade with which they could make themselves useful while they were arousing the peasantry to revolt, or peacefully spreading the gospel of the new order. To use Bakunin's phrase, they "went to the people."

To the outside world they were a fresh crop of Nihilists. But, as Turgenev perfectly understood, these followers of the violent Bakunin and the relatively moderate Lavrov were quite different from the Nihilists of the sixties, whose road had proved a blind alley and been abandoned. These earnest, selfless souls who were running the presses abroad for the publication of underground literature, and who in 1874 had left in thirty-seven provinces at home traces of their propaganda, had identified their personal salvation with the cause of the masses, the People. These Populists rejected the extreme materialism and utilitarianism of their predecessors, and restored æsthetics and philosophy to the old pedestals. They lived for an ideal—the achievement of social justice, based upon agrarian communism and primitive democracy. Turgenev's novel was to deal with this new phase in the history of intellectual Russia.

Some of his material was, happily, to be found in Paris. There were models ready to hand in the Russian colony whose members plotted and starved and studied in the attics of the Latin Quarter. Not a few of these young people resorted to his well-known generosity, and he cultivated them because youth was irresistible to him, and incidentally because they were his subject-matter. He was acquainted not only with the rank and file, but also with men who were the captains of revolution: young Prince Kropotkin, the gifted Kravchinsky, the great Peter Lavrov, the brilliant Lopatin, whom Karl Marx loved and admired. A Russian friend sent Turgenev a portofolio of diaries and letters, to help him realize what the thoughtful youth were like. He was even on the point of making a trip to Zurich, which became, after the fall of the Paris Commune, a hot-bed of extreme radicalism, and where over a hun-

dred Russian girls were studying at the university, fitting themselves for revolutionary activity at home.

He picked up his novel several times, only to drop it again. He had promised it long before its completion, to "The Herald of Europe." In order to force himself to get ahead with it, he had the editor, Stasulevich, advance him money of which he had no need at the moment, so that his indebtedness would spur him on to fresh efforts. While he was working on the book, he was insisting that he had nothing more to say and desired to say nothing more, that living away from Russia as he did, his art was no better fed than a hibernating bear who sucks his own paw. At the same time he was not unaware that he was hatching an important piece of work. He told the earnest and caustic Saltykov that he did n't want to disappear from the face of the earth before he had finished his big novel. He begged the great satirist not to be annoyed with him because, to keep his hand in, he was writing trivial things. "Who knows?" he added wistfully. "Perhaps I shall yet kindle the hearts of men!"

He finally wrote the novel "at one stroke," as he said, in the summer of 1876, when he was again at Spasskoye, in the throes of difficulties connected with the administration of his estates. He exhibited a capacity for work which must have appeared miraculous even to himself. In a surprisingly cheerful letter to Flaubert he wrote that he was spending white nights bent over his desk. He was possessed by what, with his wonted modesty, he described as the "illusion" that if he could not say a new word, he could at least say an old one in a new way. "My devil of a novel," he said, "has gotten hold of me in a ravaging fashion in spite of everything." In the middle of July he completed the manuscript under Belinsky's eyes—the portrait of his old friend hung above his desk. It was October, and he was back at Bougival, in his recently built chalet, which smelled of new furniture, when he set "Finis" to his clean copy. The manuscript was forthwith sent by messenger to Annenkov, who was just then staying in Baden. Turgenev was overjoyed by his friend's warm reception of the book and obediently followed his advice as to alterations and omissions. Annenkov was highly enthusiastic. Here, once more, was a novel which was

an event. The Danube guns—the preamble to the Russo-Turkish War was then in progress—might drown out the book, but not for long. Turgenev need not worry about the success of "Virgin Soil"; such works leave broken pavements behind them, like Krupp cannon.

Since the novel trod on dangerous ground, the author suffered some anxiety as to how it would fare at the hands of the censor. The epigraph of the book refers to a plow which should cut deep. Turgenev hastened to explain to Stasulevich that what he meant was not revolution, but the civilizing force of education. At first the prospect was favorable. But on December 6, 1876, a group of students of both sexes gathered before the Kazan Cathedral in Petersburg, and shouting, "Long live the revolution!" hoisted the red flag, with the inscription: "Land and Liberty," a slogan which long survived the underground organization of that name which was founded the same year. The demonstration, which seemed to Turgenev the height of folly, filled him and his publisher with despair: surely the authorities would consider untimely the publication of a novel which dared to deal with the revolution. However, the first part of the work—it was to appear in two instalments in "The Herald of Europe"—passed unchallenged. The second part got by with some difficulty and was saved by a little diplomacy on the part of the editor. Rumor tells that he put a copy of the manuscript into the hands of the empress's lectrice, that the emperor heard a chapter or two and signified his approval. The novel appeared in book form the following year, and by that time it was accessible in nine languages.

The censors had reason to look at "Virgin Soil" with suspicion, if only because of the author's cavalier treatment of government officials. Moreover, if he presents the revolutionists as puerile and futile, his attitude toward them is less that of enmity than of affectionate derision. Temperamentally, they seem closer to him than the Nihilists typified by Bazarov. And Solomin, the prosy hero of the novel, the man upon whose broad plebeian shoulders, Turgenev insists, the future of Russia rests, Solomin accepts the ends of the militant Populists, even if he rejects their means. True, this hard-headed, hard-working fellow, whose English technical education was

successfully grafted upon the native shrewdness of the Great Russian, does not believe in the imminence of the revolution. He relies, like Turgenev, on the gradual, incremental, peaceful process of education for the achievement of a just social order. His outlook is in sharp contrast with the liberal velleities of the gentry and with the bureaucracy's veneer of progressivism. Like Turgenev, he foresees the decay of the predatory feudal class, but his pleasure in that eventuality is tempered by the conviction that the masses would gain nothing from the rise of an equally predacious bourgeoisie.

The author held that Solomin the sober—the epithet was written in large letters at the head of the sheet on which this character's biography was sketched out—was the true hero of his book. The reader is inclined to raise to that dignity the pathetic Nihilist, Nezhdanov. This sensitive, introspective, frustrate young student is a house divided against itself, a fact symbolized in and partly accounted for by his birth: he is the illegitimate son of an aristocrat. One of a little group of revolutionists, he yet has no real faith in the Cause. Taken on as a tutor in the house of a wealthy government official, he meets there a young girl, Marianna (named for Marianne Viardot), who, like himself, has been humbled by circumstance and placed in an ambiguous position. She too is ready to dedicate herself to the oppressed masses, but with complete courage and unselfishness.

Here is the familiar contrast between the weak hesitancy of the man and the calm strength of the woman. The two are drawn to each other, less by a physical attraction than by a community of ideals; indeed, they flee the house together, resolved to "go to the people." Nezhdanov, a Hamlet in the rôle of Don Quixote, takes part in an abortive effort to rouse the peasants. The result is self-disgust and literal nausea, because he cannot carry the raw vodka which his potential proselytes force down his throat. The young man is entangled in a tragic coil. He recognizes that he is unworthy of Marianna; then, too, he is reluctant to sacrifice himself for a cause in which he cannot believe. He cuts the knot by putting a bullet through his heart. Turgenev points the moral of his tale by giving Marianna in marriage to Solomin. In sum, what the novelist here offers the young men by way of counsel is essentially

the same as the lesson of "Smoke": advance by inches; serve the people humbly that they may be ready for a future leader; work steadily at the small task.

Some time before "Virgin Soil" took definite shape, Turgenev was hoping that its publication would show where he stood and thus dispel the cloud of disapproval in which he had been enveloped since the appearance of "Fathers and Children." By the time the manuscript was in proof, he had lost that confidence, and was saying cynically that he did n't care what happened to the book, as long as he got the cash for it. (As a matter of fact, he got one hundred rubles more per sheet than he had asked.) In a more serious mood he said he was sure the younger critics would flay him, but he anticipated this with philosophic detachment, feeling that in the end they would recognize him for one of their own.

His worst fears were justified. He was accused of having drawn a distorted picture, of being generally incompetent to deal with the subject, and, as Annenkov too had foreseen, he was denounced as having defamed the youth. Later opinion reversed this judgment. As a matter of fact, Turgenev gaged with remarkable penetration the social forces then at work: peasants, landowners, revolutionary intellectuals, bureaucrats. A participant in the revolutionary movement could undoubtedly have presented a more accurate account of the situation, but for an innocent bystander, he acquitted himself brilliantly. He saw clearly that the Populists had no understanding of the masses whom they were trying to arouse, and events bore out his contention that their efforts would prove vain.

As usual, the damning remarks of the critics had more weight with him than the private encouragement of friends like Annenkov and Stasulevich, whose judgment posterity has ratified. Several weeks after the second part of this masterly novel appeared in print he wrote, on the same day, in almost identical terms, to his brother and to his publisher, crying *mea culpa* and announcing his final abdication as a writer. His eyes had been opened with regard to "Virgin Soil": it was a failure. Surely the entire press had n't entered into a conspiracy against the book. Furthermore, all that the critics said was true. In his heart he agreed with them. No, one

could n't write about Russia without living there. He had taken upon himself a task to which he was unequal, and fallen down under it. It would have been better if he had stopped writing several years previously. "There has been something tragic in the fate of every Russian writer who was at all prominent; with me, it is absentee-ism, the causes of which it would take too long to go into, but the influence of which is incontestably expressed in my last—I *mean* last—work."

CHAPTER XXXIV

A MARRIAGE OF SOULS

IFE in Paris had its compensatory features. In spite of his prejudice against France, Turgenev had moments of feeling that nowhere else could one live so comfortably and freely. For one thing, there were highly stimulating contacts. His was an uneasiness of spirit which might have crabbed and soured another, and a habit of narrowly observing his companions, which few of them relished. But he had, too, the savoir faire of a man of the world, the novelist's interest in his fellows, a boy's love of fun, and the approachability of an abjectly modest man—all of which made for smooth and generous social intercourse. On his previous visits to Paris he had come to know virtually everybody worth knowing. By the time he came to make his home there, some of those old acquaintances were gone: Prosper Mérimée, one of his translators, and also Sainte-Beuve, who, during their last encounter in 1868, had drawn the location of his supposed cancer for his guest.

Of the old guard, there remained, among others, "Mother Sand." Although he had known her for many years, through the Viardots, it was only now that he was entering the circle of her familiars. As a young man he had, like the rest of Belinsky's group, thrilled to her championship of caged emotions, the oppressed sex, and the downtrodden People. Belinsky himself had called her "the Joan of Arc of our time." In his maturity Turgenev was inclined to dismiss her

writings as tiresome garrulities. But now, seeing her intimately, and ignoring, as most good friends had to do, her novels, he succumbed completely to her personal charms. For her part, she had long known and admired his work: he wrote simply and sincerely where her compatriots, she contended, either posed or wallowed. She praised him to his face, and he showed himself "as surprised as a child," and she said the same kind things in print, when she dedicated to him a sketch published in *Le Temps* in October, 1872.

There was more than one exchange of courtesies: he sent her his kill, and at another time, in default of game, a barrel of oysters; she presented him with a pair of cuff-links. She begged their common friend Gustave Flaubert to prepare him for abduction; she must see him at Nohant. And indeed, after he settled in Paris, he made several trips there, generally along with the Viardots. He arrived, usually after several postponements, occasioned sometimes by gout, sometimes by his habit of letting himself be waylaid. "That 's what it means," he apologized once to his prospective hostess, "to have a short thumb—the sign of a weak will."

Not these latter-day visits, but rather the memory of his youthful admiration, led him to canonize her after her death in 1876. "George Sand," he concluded his obituary note, "is one of our saints." And yet his final estimate of her owed not a little to this friendly intercourse at the end. Certainly it was rare refreshment to spend a day with this plump, soft-voiced, soft-footed old lady, who looked like a Jewess, he observed, because of her wig, and who was always trailing cigarette smoke and an atmosphere of benevolence and generosity. She lived at Nohant, her ancestral estate, companioned by her son, his wife, and their two little daughters. Here was an idyllic epilogue to a life dangerously crowded with loves and labors. Her guests were treated to hunting in the morning, fresh-water bathing in the afternoon, and music or marionettes in the evening. Maurice Sand modeled the dolls' heads and his mother made their dresses; like Voltaire and Goethe before her, she was devoted to her puppets. And amid these preoccupations, "the dear lazy soul of a Turgenev," as she called him, was sure to find time to tell fairy-tales to her favorite grandchild, their "delicious Lolo."

In the middle of March, 1873, she invited him and Flaubert to

Nohant for a "mid-Lent fantasy." She even promised the big Norman a costume; she had heard he was "very good as a pastry-cook at Pauline's." Flaubert replied that Turgenev seemed to him "to enjoy very little liberty," but that he had finally succeeded in making him swear to go to Mme. Sand's on Easter Eve. It was after this visit that the two men, sitting in the carriage which took them to the railway station, spoke enviously of young Sand, who, in addition to being happily married and the father of two charming children, had this jewel of a mother. Flaubert, whose attachment to his own mother had verged on the morbid, had only recently lost her, and Turgenev must have contrasted the good Mme. Sand with his erratic maternal parent. In the train Flaubert felt heavy and sad, and consoled himself with his companion's excellent cognac. Turgenev, whose diffidence consorted ill with the dignity of his silver beard and his great frame, was well able to be compassionate toward this big Norman, with the shoulders of an ox, the mustaches of a Viking, and the complexion once likened to brandied cherries fallen into the fire, who concealed behind his roaring vehemence the spirit of a shy boy.

At this time the two men were bound by a friendship of long standing. Indeed, Flaubert was the only French confrère with whom Turgenev achieved a real intimacy. They had met for the first time in a tavern on the left bank of the Seine, and they were to go on exchanging opinions on life and letters across a variety of dinner-tables for more than twenty years. He had invited Flaubert, as he did so many others, to join him in Baden, offering as one inducement its giant trees: to sit in their shade, he said, was to borrow their sap. Although Flaubert did not accept the invitation, and there was little intercourse between them in the next half-dozen years, the warmth of Turgenev's feeling for him did not abate. In 1868 *"le bon Moscove,"* as his friend liked to call him, was writing that there were few men with whom he felt so completely at ease and so alive. "And besides," he added, "we are two moles tunneling in the same direction." That same year he went to see Flaubert for the first time in his lair, an old house overlooking the Seine, in the village of Croisset near Rouen. Upon his departure his host sent after him a native cheese, which he took with him to Baden, assuring the

sender that at every mouthful he would remember the day at Croisset.

The month which witnessed the beginning of the Franco-Prussian War found Flaubert telling George Sand that she and Turgenev were the only people to whom he could talk freely of the things nearest his heart. When the Commune was intrenched in Paris, Turgenev inquired of Flaubert how he had stood the storm: "We have some hard moments to live through," he wrote, "we others, born spectators." Upon the collapse of the revolutionary régime, he wrote again, in reply to a note from Croisset. He no longer invited his French friend to his Baden mole-burrow, as, with a tactlessness surprising in him, he had done in his previous letter: "I understand your repugnance to setting foot on German soil." When they see each other, they can talk over this matter of the war at leisure—not that it is a pleasant subject.

It was, indeed, a sore subject. In his note Flaubert had intimated that it was Russia's duty now to avenge France. As a matter of fact, the detached and haughty maître, who had always abominated the patriotism of the mob, had so far succumbed to the war hysteria that he had wanted to take up arms "against the compatriots of Hegel." He swore he would never put eyes on another of "these cannibals," who wished to destroy Paris because it was beautiful. Apparently he did not appreciate that his correspondent was pro-German. When the fighting was over, Flaubert, more disheartened by the stupid and dishonorable conduct of his fellow-countrymen than by the horrors of war, said in bitter jest that he was going to ask Turgenev what he must do to become a Russian.

What the two men found to say to each other about the conflict when they met after it was over, is not a matter of record. It is highly probable that Turgenev avoided wounding Flaubert by presenting the German point of view too warmly. A friend was more precious to him than an opinion. Besides, by this time Flaubert had turned from denouncing the Germans to berating the French, as a nation that "closed its eyes to the truth, that loved *la blague,* that asked art to be moral, philosophy to be clear, vice to be decent." Such a wholesome attitude of self-criticism was just what Turgenev had hoped would result from the defeat. The Frenchman's remedy

—to educate the ruling middle-class—was also quite in line with his ideas, and he was likely to welcome Flaubert's pet notion of basing politics on science, and making the Government a section of the Academy. Certainly, Turgenev sympathized with Flaubert's feeling that there was no place for such a "mandarin" as himself in the hideous world which the conflict had ushered in. In any event, their friendship did not split on the rock of war. It grew stronger with the years.

They saw much of each other in Paris, where they both wintered. Flaubert was occasionally at Mme. Viardot's Thursdays and Sundays, and Turgenev thought nothing of spending the day with him, only to return after dinner and remain until one in the morning. There would also be, after many delays, a visit to Croisset now and then. That is, when Flaubert could tear Turgenev away from the Viardots, of whom he was not a little jealous: "Turgenev would like to come, but the Viardots take him elsewhere, and he is afraid to face their wrath." And three years later, when Turgenev neglects him, he again suggests that perhaps he is too much occupied with the Viardots. But it was not easy for Flaubert to take care of him when he came. Before one prospective visit the host was much exercised as to whether or not his guest could be accommodated on the bed in the spare room. He wrote from Paris to the niece who kept house for him, asking her to measure the couch, and saying that he would give up his own bed. Turgenev presented his friend with a dressing-gown, and regaled him with such Russian products as Tolstoy's "War and Peace," as well as salmon and caviar. They were both gourmets, especially the Frenchman. He won ten bottles of champagne from the Muscovite by wagering that hot roast chicken is eaten with mustard. The famous chef, Pellé, was consulted and rendered this decision: "It is done [eaten without mustard], and even often, but it is not according to the rules of good cooking."

The notes Turgenev wrote to Flaubert, addressing him as "my dear old fellow" or "my ferocious ancient," are among the most charming of his letters and are, indeed, more felicitously worded than those he wrote in Russian. There is little shop talk in these messages, but an occasional inquiry as to Flaubert's work. When, in the summer of 1875, he was taking a rest in a Swiss resort, Turgenev

asked if he was inventing "something passionate, torrid, incandescent, in his ice-box at Rigi," and wished that his hyperemic friend would come back "pale and monochrome as a line by Lamartine." Not seldom the letters carry a strain of fraternal affection, which expressed itself practically in an effort to obtain for the pinched Flaubert a sinecure at the Bibliothèque Mazarine.

"I am a soft pear and an old rag, but I love you and embrace you," one letter concludes. Flaubert, in a moment of exasperation at the Muscovite's spinelessness, had called him "a soft pear," and the nickname stuck—a fact which Turgenev accepted with the heartiest good humor. Had n't he reproached himself years earlier, in a letter to Herzen, with what he called "my sheep-like nature"? Besides, there was the gout. Flaubert could not understand this disease; the procrastination it caused made him dizzy. In the last note he was to receive from Turgenev, the latter, referring to one of his customary delays, added: "Of course, you will tell me I am a soft pear, a rag, a clout, and I say you are right."

The letters from his "Patmos," as Turgenev called Spasskoye, had to make up to Flaubert for the visits he was never able to pay there. They describe the atmosphere of "grave and immense stupor, in which there is at once something of life, of the beast, and of God"; the warm pallor of earth and sky in a landscape that would be merely pretty were it not for the large sweep, the great uniform spaces which lend it dignity; the old wooden mansion, with its ivy-clad veranda and green iron roof; his study, with its soporific sofa, and an ancient Byzantine icon frowning darkly from the corner, nothing but an immense face, black, lugubrious, rigid, framed in silver—a rather annoying companion, which he dare not remove, lest his servants think him a pagan. One evening, Turgenev wrote, he sat on the balcony while some sixty peasant women, nearly all in red and all ugly, except one, were dancing like she-bears and singing in harsh if true voices. It was one of the little fêtes he was in the habit of arranging, and which cost him only a couple of pails of vodka, some cakes, and nuts. And then, too, it cost him some heartache. Watching their awkward gambols, he felt, as he confessed to Flaubert, "terribly sad."

It was scarcely an unusual thing for him to be sad. True, he

sometimes tried to cheer up his correspondent, who was in sore need of cheering, especially in his last years, when he was contending with genteel poverty and was in the midst of the excruciating labors on his last novel. Shortly before his death, Flaubert complained that he was liquefying like an old Camembert. All too often Turgenev allowed himself the luxury of detailing the minutiæ of his own liquefaction and general wretchedness. "Infirmities, slow and chill disgust, the painful agitation of useless memories—that's, *mon bon vieux,* the prospect that offers itself to a man past fifty." At the writing, they are both past that age. Turgenev is indisposed: Mme. Death has left a visiting-card to show that she has not forgotten him. His days at Bougival run out, like water, like sand—the reading of the second canto of Byron's "Don Juan" making "a luminous streak across the grayness." He feels old, gray, dull, useless and stupid, and even his attack of gout was abortive, like everything else. He has no sorrow, but neither has he any joy, like a shadow in the Elysian fields of Gluck's *Orphée.* He turns sixty: "This is the beginning of life's tail." When existence becomes absolutely personal and on the defensive against death, it loses interest, even for the individual concerned. A year later, he feels "impotent, old, forlorn, gouty, with two sores instead of legs," but even though he keeps to his room like an old crab in his damp hole, he will make an effort to drag himself to Flaubert's lodging on the morrow.

Flaubert was the first to surrender the fort. Turgenev was in the depths of Scythia when, in May, 1880, his friend died at Croisset. Four years earlier, condoling with that very friend on the death of George Sand, he had written that this "good felllow" and "good woman," with all her charm and valor, had disappeared into a hole that did n't even know what it had devoured. And now the insatiable hole had claimed another rare and doughty spirit. To the woman who had guarded Flaubert in those last clouded years, Turgenev wrote: "The death of your uncle is one of the greatest sorrows I have experienced in all my life, and I can't accustom myself to the thought that I sha'n't see him again. It 's one of those pains for which one does n't want to be consoled." And he offered her his services in connection with the publication of the novel which had "killed" his friend. With Hugo and Zola, he served on the com-

mittee for the erection of a monument to the novelist, and even, to the indignation of the patriots, solicited subscriptions for it at home.

Daudet, who saw much of the two men, and often when they were together, speaks of their relation as "a marriage of souls." It appears, to the outside observer, as unaccountable as most marriages. True, they had a high regard for each other's work and critical judgment. Turgenev considered that Flaubert alone could dispute with Tolstoy the title of the foremost contemporary writer, and *Flaubertus dixit* was to him the last word. Although the Frenchman was more reserved, he too had the highest opinion of his friend, both as novelist and critic. "Nothing escapes him," he wrote to George Sand, after having read to Turgenev a part of the manuscript of *La Tentation de St. Antoine.* "At the end of a hundred lines he remembers one weak epithet. He made two or three excellent suggestions. . . ." This was exactly thirty years after the listener had submitted to Tatyana Bakunin a portion of his own abortive "St. Anthony's Temptation."

They had much in common, aside from their work. They were contemporaries, Flaubert having been born the same year as Pauline Viardot. Both were old bachelors, both lonely, for all their friendships and interests. Celibates are apt to be drawn together. Further, each of them abominated the class into which he was born, and the respective characteristics of which each, to some extent, exemplified. Like Turgenev, Flaubert was acutely aware of what he called "the Machiavellism of Nature." Above all, they were two writers, as Turgenev liked to insist, tunneling in the same direction. Both were dedicated to the objective method, and both were intent on making the novel not the vehicle of fantasy or individual crotchets, but a transparent vessel which would at once show the true color of life and give it shape.

But if Flaubert, like Turgenev, was a realist, there was also in his work a romantic pull toward frenzy and exoticism which was quite alien to Turgenev's sober temperament. The disciple of Gautier was much more indifferent to the moral implications of art than the pupil of Belinsky could ever be. The author of *Salammbô,* unlike the author of "Fathers and Children," had never been told that he must convey the body and pressure of his own time. Flau-

bert's interest was mainly in form, in manner, in technique. Turgenev, although he scolded his compatriots for their churlish neglect of these matters, was for his own part never so deeply concerned with them as his friend. He could not see the virtues of Chateaubriand's style, much to the distress of Flaubert, who considered it the fountainhead of French prose. His loathing of Hugo was only matched by Flaubert's idolization of that grand old man of literature. "God! to what lengths," Turgenev was writing, apropos of the appearance of *Les Chansons des Rues et des Bois,* "the vileness and abomination of decay can go! Can any emetic compare to this? An age in which such reptiles crawl into the light can have no place for art."

There were all these differences between the truculent Norman and his soft-spoken confrère from the steppes, and in addition, the immutable fact that one was French and the other Russian, a circumstance the implications of which forced themselves increasingly upon Turgenev's attention. Yet the union was a real one; indeed, some of their differences drew them together. One senses in Turgnev's attitude something of the quality of his affection for Belinsky, some shadow of his feeling for Stankevich. Like those friends of his youth, Flaubert possessed a passionate integrity, a strength of will, which found expression in his monkish devotion to his work. The "soft pear" admired and loved this tenacity, if he could not imitate it. Daudet tells us that in this union Turgenev played the feminine part. "In the factory which turns out human beings," he adds, "there is such confusion that a masculine soul sometimes gets into a female body and a feminine soul into the carcass of a cyclops."

CHAPTER XXXV

PARIS: FRIENDS AND STRANGERS

ART of the routine of Turgenev's life in Paris was his way of disposing of his Sunday afternoons. He spent them at Flaubert's. He had to limp up three flights of stairs to the apartment overlooking the lawns and trees of Parc Monceau. Generally the first of the company to arrive, he would exchange fraternal embraces with his host, and either curl up on the divan "like a boa" or sink into an arm-chair, in genial anticipation of hours of palaver. Before long, others would assemble. The host sometimes lent to the otherwise conventional scene an exotic note. Mme. Daudet, coming to fetch her husband one evening, found Flaubert presiding over the gathering, clad in a kind of Arab blouse decorated with an ancient frill, and wearing a red Algerian cap.

Turgenev might bring with him a volume of Goethe to translate for the company, and at least one of his listeners felt that it was like hearing Goethe himself read and speak. Once he tried to introduce them to Swinburne. But readings were incidental. The late afternoon hours, when twilight was thickening the shadows in the smoky room, loosed the spirit of talk among these quick and well-stocked intelligences, and Turgenev, for whom conversation was as natural a medium as writing, basked and soared in his element. All manner of subjects were touched upon: the sciences as well as the arts, food as well as philosophy. A young stranger from the States,

one Henry James, came to some of these Sunday gatherings as a half-worshipful, half-critical apprentice.

By that time the impoverished Flaubert had removed to a more modest apartment just under the roof of a house at the end of the Faubourg St.-Honoré, a place which James describes as looking "rather bare and provisional." The substance of the discussion "in that little smoke-clouded room" was, he tells us, "chiefly questions of taste, questions of art and form; and the speakers, for the most part, were in æsthetic matters radicals of the deepest dye. . . . The conviction that held them together was the conviction that art and morality are two utterly different things, and that the former has no more to do with the latter than it has with astronomy or embryology. The only duty of a novel was to be well written; that merit included every other of which it was capable." If Turgenev, who had a phenomenal memory, recalled how, twenty years previously, he had disdained French writers for their want of æsthetic principles, he could only have remarked how times had changed. There was nothing now that they had in greater abundance. Perhaps because James too was an outsider, he observed that Turgenev had "reservations and discriminations" which set him apart from these companions and kept him from being "all there, as the phrase is." But the American admitted that the Russian "so far as he was on the spot . . . was an element of pure sociability."

It was at Flaubert's that Turgenev met for the first time Alphonse Daudet, the little man with the big head that seemed to belong to another body, and Emile Zola. Both men were then in their thirties; Daudet was already fairly well established in the literary world, but Zola was still struggling along. Turgenev gave his ready friendship to both, especially to the one who most needed befriending. He had long known Edmond Goncourt, whose sharp-featured face he also saw here frequently. The four of them formed the group of Flaubert's "faithful." Turgenev was very much one of them and found all doors open to him. Daudet's son recalls how, as a little boy, at the age for fairy-tales, seeing Turgenev and Flaubert enter the house, he exclaimed: "Are those giants?"

Goncourt's "attic," which took the place of Flaubert's little salon

after his death, was another haunt of the Muscovite's. Beginning with 1872, the Goncourt journals are sprinkled with references to "the gentle giant . . . with white hair falling into his eyes and a deep furrow across his forehead." The collector's passion which the two Goncourts had shared, as they had shared everything, had turned their old house in the vicinity of the Bois de Boulogne into something of a museum. The study, which smelt pleasantly of old books and glowed with the gold of the bindings, held, in the shape of an immense desk built for two, a monument to the strange intellectual symbiosis of the brothers. It was here, one morning in 1877, that Turgenev came to hear Edmond Goncourt read aloud the first novel he had set pen to since his brother's death. Flaubert was absent, being laid up with a broken leg, and, by Daudet's account, shaking the air of Normandy with formidable Carthaginian oaths. But his "faithful," along with the publisher Charpentier, were all there.

And of course Turgenev was seen now and then in the distinguished crowd that packed Victor Hugo's large salon, presided over by the David bust. The aged dean of French letters, a little deaf, somewhat absent-minded and withdrawn, throned it at the head of the dining-table, his neck swathed in a white foulard scarf, his arms folded over his chest, his body buttoned into a frock-coat and leaning back slightly. Goncourt describes his manner of toying with and caressing the words he spoke in a slow, rather flat voice, his eyes half closed, his face, with the dark warmth of a Rembrandt syndic, "playing dead" but crossed by strange feline expressions. And hovering about was his friend, Mme. Drouet, the quondam Juliette of the Gaiety, now a white-haired old lady. Turgenev, who liked to regale his friends at home with anecdotes about the French, took away from these visits more than one to illustrate the demigod's ignorance and vanity. The choicest of them, of which there are several variants, has Hugo credit Goethe, whom he hated as much as Turgenev loved him, with the authorship of "Wallenstein."

"But maître!" Turgenev remonstrated, " 'Wallenstein' was written by Schiller."

"Well," grumbled Hugo, "they are all one."

A more popular version in which Turgenev does not figure, has the poet exclaim: "You see: somebody else wrote Goethe's best work!"

Generally speaking, Turgenev had only sneers for French verse. In 1873 he recommended Leconte de Lisle to Foeth with the comment: "Although a Frenchman, he 's a true poet."

The members of the little group with which Turgenev fell in, occasionally dined together at one another's homes, but more often at some café. Gautier died too soon after Turgenev's settlement in Paris for the novelist to see much of him, but he appeared at least once at these restaurant gatherings, and so did Mère Sand, whom Goncourt ungallantly described as getting more and more mummified. In 1874, at a dinner at Café Riche, it was decided to hold these refections once a month during the coming winter. They came to be known as "the dinners of the Five"—Turgenev, Flaubert, Goncourt, Zola, and Daudet—or "the dinners of the hooted authors." Each of the four Frenchmen laid claim to the title by reason of a recent failure, and Turgenev assured them that he was hooted at home, a statement which they accepted on faith, since they had too far to travel to verify it. For misprised writers, they were very exclusive, refusing, for example, to admit to their circle Girardin, who wanted to slip in, because he was only a journalist.

The Five were hard to suit and often changed restaurants, going from Café Riche to Adolph and Pellé, behind the Opera, or to the tavern on the corner of rue Favart, known for its bouillabaisse, or to Voisin, whose cellar satisfied all desires and conciliated all appetites. Every one of these men had something of the gourmand in him, and had strong preferences in food as in literature. When Zola was in the flush of his prosperity he served up a dinner consisting of green-rye soup, Lapland reindeer tongues, gray mullet à la provençale, and guinea-foul with truffles. It was their general custom to start at seven in the evening and remain at table two hours or more. Flaubert, his vest unbuttoned, presided with Rabelaisian verve.

The food was important and the conversation more so. The Goncourt Journals evoke the atmosphere of these symposia. The Muscovite's childlike voice would begin to charm the company as soon as the soup was on the table. They talked shop, they gossiped,

they reminisced. The inaugural dinner opened with a dissertation on the difference between constipated and diarrheic writers, and from that the talk drifted to the mechanism of the French language. It was likely to drift to almost any topic. It touched upon things weighty and trivial, personalities and ideas, contemporaries and classics. Once, Goncourt reports, Turgenev, "his lips wet with desire," cried out that he would give anything for "The Wine-flask," the lost comedy of that old drunkard Cratinus, which won the Athenian prize over Aristophanes' "Clouds." As they grew more expansive, Zola was likely to complain of his poverty and Daudet to strike up a Provençal song. Each brought a mélange of impressions and opinions to share with the others.

There were two subjects of which the company never tired: love and death. The cynicism with which these Parisians discoursed on the major passion must have been almost as disconcerting to Turgenev as it was to that other stranger within their gates, Henry James. They told salacious stories which it was hard for him to match, although, being a sociable sort, he did his best, and they alluded casually to perversities which merely puzzled him. They must have listened with amusement to his declaration that the eyes of the first woman he had ever loved seemed to him discarnate. And he must have taken in with embarrassed bewilderment Flaubert's stories of his amorous experiences in Egypt.

When Flaubert and Goncourt maintained that love had no bearing on a writer's work, he simply let his arms drop. Nothing, he confessed, could take the place of women for him. Love alone could produce that exquisite unfolding of the whole being which so stimulates the artist. Zola observing that love had no specific qualities to distinguish it from the other emotions, Turgenev insisted that it had a color peculiarly its own, that it produced an effect unlike the effect of any other feeling. But then, Flaubert, Goncourt and Zola all admitted that they had never been seriously in love. He himself approached a woman with respect, with agitation, with surprise at the happiness which the encounter gave him. These men seemed to know only physical sensations. When the talk was of death Turgenev was on firmer ground. A dinner would begin gaily enough, and end in a minor key. On one of these occasions

he impressed the company with a nightmare he had had, in which he had identified a brown stain on the wall in front of his bed with death itself. Sooner or later the "black subject" was bound to crop up.

Turgenev's friendship for these men was not merely a matter of intellectual traffic and social courtesies. He begged off when Guy de Maupassant wanted to begin a series of literary appreciations with an essay on him. He had a horror, he pleaded, of *réclame amicale*. But he himself indulged in friendly puffery without stint. He taxed himself to promote his friends' interests. He tried to introduce them to foreign audiences, using his connections on the Continent and in England to that end. He wrote, or at least promised to write, prefaces; he revised; he translated. Occasionally he advanced money to the author on expected sales. He worked for the French, as he worked for the Germans, as he worked for his own countrymen. In his last decade he turned himself into a kind of international literary agent, an earnest, eager, and not always efficient go-between, giving his services freely and sometimes to his own cost. He did this partly because of his love for literature, partly out of pure generosity,—there was not a spark of jealousy in him,—partly out of his inability to refuse any one anything.

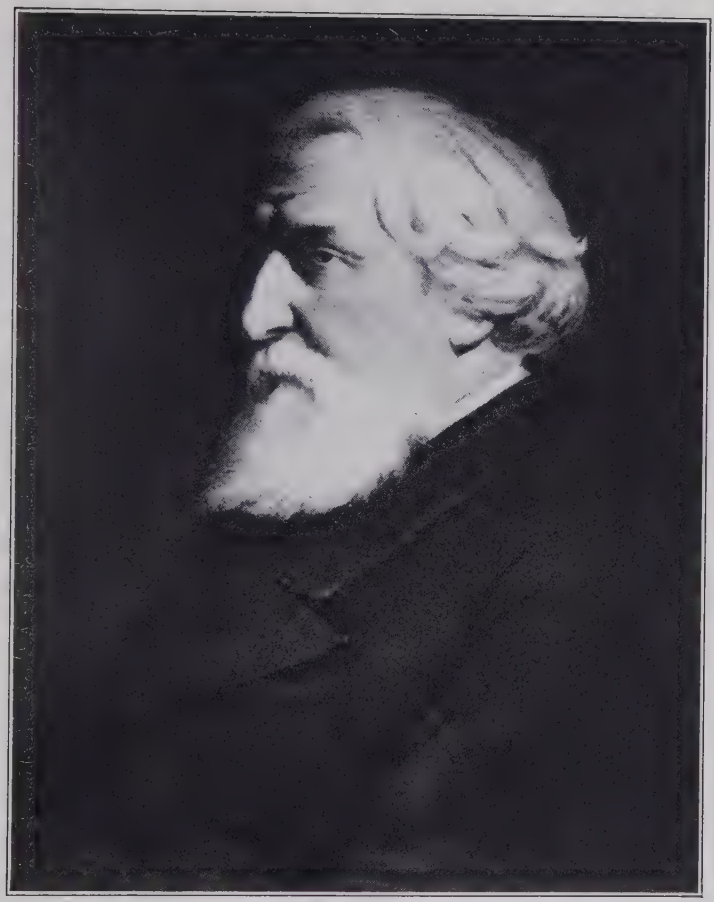
He confessed to a Russian publisher that his encomiums were often due to an amiable weakness. They finally agreed that his recommendations should be disregarded unless he volunteered to read proof. He promised Auerbach a foreword to the Russian translation of "The Country House on the Rhine," and having delayed the task from day to day, finally deputed Pietsch to write it for him, and put his own signature to the piece. His penalty was to read the thing to Auerbach and hear him say, "You alone could have penetrated so deeply into my soul!" There was not a little of vicarious fatherly affection in Turgenev's treatment of struggling authors, as in his anxious running about and fussing over the scores of his young compatriots who presented themselves to him in Paris for assistance in one and another way.

Zola especially was in his debt—Zola, whom, according to Goncourt, he treated with "paternal irony." He was taken under Turgenev's wing in the days when, by his own account, he was

starving. Turgenev placed his novels with Russian publishers; indeed, *La Faute de l'Abbé Mouret* made its first appearance in a Russian translation. He arranged to have him contribute to Petersburg reviews, and even told him what to write about. He passed on his complaints to the editor. He passed on the editor's explanations. He remitted payments. One of Zola's ways of requiting these attentions was to give a reading at the matinée which Turgenev arranged for the benefit of needy Russian students. The wild man, whom Turgenev described as something like "an intelligent, somewhat awkward and baggy Parisian working-man," was altogether *comme il faut,* even to white gloves, and having stayed awake three nights over the worry of this, his first public appearance, was unable for a scandalous length of time to utter a syllable.

Turgenev also took steps to interest Russian publishers in the works of Goncourt and Taine, and particularly of young Maupassant, the flower of Flaubert's little flock. When his efforts to get a translation of *Une Vie* published in Russia—a translation at which he personally had worked—proved vain, he paid the author a thousand francs out of his own pocket: "To present four hundred rubles to a man of talent, who is, moreover, my friend—my means permit that." As for the master himself, Turgenev could not do too much for him. He translated *La Légende de St. Julien l'Hospitalier* and *Hérodias,* lavishing on them all his skill as a stylist, and flattering himself that in this pitting of his native tongue against the French, Russian had not come off so badly. He refused to take any payment for his pains, turning over all the proceeds to the author of the original, who was then in straightened circumstances. He had also arranged for the translation of *La Tentation de St. Antoine,* but the censorship barred it. He offered to send copies of the book to competent critics in England, and trumpeted the author's praises to friends in Germany.

Not that he was whole-heartedly in sympathy with the work of his French confrères, Flaubert excepted. He had the highest respect for "the gay, fresh, and healthy" talent of Guy de Maupassant, and he did not deny that the others were gifted: he recognized the originality of Goncourt, the charm of Daudet, the solidity of Zola. He appreciated their understanding of their craft. If only



TURGENEV IN 1872
From a portrait by Perov

their concentration upon their work had not blunted their sense of life and its values! Everything that these arrant litterateurs handled turned to literature as everything Midas handled turned to gold, and in both cases the gift was a curse. The fact that Turgenev had something of the Midas-touch himself, did not make him any less sensible of its bane. French literature, he once observed, stinks of literature. He was thinking, more particularly, of the Goncourts and perhaps Daudet.

As for Zola, he found his method essentially "vicious." Excellent as his prose was, he exhibited the chamber-pot too often. Sitting at a beer-table with George Moore at the Elysée Montmartre one rainy evening, Turgenev had a good word to say for the heroine of *L'Assommoir,* which was then appearing serially, but added that the book was spoilt by the author's desire to tell "what she [Gervaise] felt rather than what she thought." "What difference does it make to me," he asked, "if she perspires in the middle of the back or under the arms?" Zola's emphasis upon the animal processes of existence, his obscenity, his scientific pretensions, were a weariness and an irritation to Turgenev. He confessed that *Nana* bored him. He suspected that Zola had never read Shakspere.. His own instincts were all in the direction of an art speaking with the tongues of men and angels the language of reason and beauty.

He broke bread with these men, he sat at their firesides, he wrote them cordial letters, he exerted himself in their behalf, but now and then the malicious youth whose sharp tongue had delighted Belinsky cropped out in this sexagenarian, and he allowed himself unkind observations on his foreign friends. Even his most ill-natured remarks were often the result of a good-natured weakness, and he would have been scandalized by his own words had he heard them repeated. He made his comments before those who were apt to savor them—Russians intensely jealous of the strangers who had annexed their Turgenev. His malice occasionally enlivened the gatherings of the Five. Sitting at dinner with them one night, he said of one of their prominent colleagues: "The comparison is not noble, but allow me, gentlemen, to liken Taine to a hound I once owned. He searched, he pointed out, he went through all the motions of a hunting-dog in the most admirable fashion, but I was

forced to sell him; he had no nose." Turgenev was on friendly terms with the critic, and indeed recommended one of his books for translation into Russian. The French must have applauded with special zest another remark to the effect that, aside from music, the Germans had no feeling for art. He generally found it hard to refrain from telling people what he thought they would like to hear, and occasionally he could be double-tongued to help a friend.

When Turgenev's uncomplimentary remarks about his French friends came to their notice after his death, through the publication in Paris in 1887 of a book of reminiscences by a young Russian *émigré,* there was a little retrospective animadversion. Daudet, who got the worst of it, expressed in print his pained surprise at his friend's duplicity. Goncourt made an entry in his journal to the effect that, after all, Turgenev's work lacked the primitive vigor of his race, and that his characters seemed to have been drawn by a Russian who had ended his days at the court of Louis XIV. He was, when all was said, a foreigner, Goncourt explained, and so, having no key to the subtleties of Parisian irony, gave vent to the irritation he could not help feeling. Daudet went farther and called in question the Muscovite's grasp of the genius of the French language, though no less an authority than Taine is said to have likened Turgenev's French to that spoken in the eighteenth-century salons of Paris.

Indeed, at bottom, Turgenev was a stranger, though in a familiar land. His point of view was fundamentally Russian, and his affectionate respect for the West was that of an outsider, naturally distrustful, curious, amused, and a shade contemptuous. He was of course aware that his French colleagues held him in high regard, except for such a soured, venomous spirit as Huysmans, who dismissed him as "a tap of tepid water." Daudet placed him on an "ivory throne" in his private heaven, and Goncourt did reverence to his "immense and cosmopolitan knowledge." But admiration centered rather about his person than around his work. He was to them the lovable barbarian, the seductive Slav, the huge snow-man with the feline smile, the colossus with eyebrows of tow, the giant of the North, the silver-haired giant with the head of the Heavenly Father and the timid gestures of a child. The very homage they

paid him betrayed their feeling that here was a prodigy, a curiosity, an alien—attractive and congenial enough, but *au fond* not one of their own.

True, being men of penetration, they grasped some of the essentials of his character. Flaubert spoke of him as an *homme mené,* a man in leading-strings. And Daudet perfectly understood, though somewhat late in the day, that Turgenev was a fretted spirit, a man dissatisfied, especially with himself; a man who had never conducted his life as he wished. The Russian, Daudet said, was like one who is badly bedded, and who turns about and about restlessly in the twisted folds of his sheets.

In his last years the dissimilarity between the Russians and the West Europeans, particularly the French, was constantly in Turgenev's mind. He developed a theory the gist of which was that each race has its own morality. Indeed, this was to be embodied in the last big work which he planned. He spoke to several of his friends about it, and their various accounts all point to the conclusion that his theme was the gulf in psychological make-up between the Russian and the Westerner, more particularly, the contrast between the Russian revolutionist's search for ethical absolutes and the French socialist's narrow, fatuous dogmatism. Turgenev's English friend and translator, W. R. S. Ralston, who had hoped to stay with him at Spasskoye in the summer of 1882 and to translate, under his supervision, the novel as it came from his pen, thus sums up the plot:

A Russian girl who has accepted the ideas held by the Nihilists, leaves her native country and settles in Paris. There she meets and eventually marries a young French socialist. For some time all goes well in the household, which is united by a common hatred of all laws and ceremonies. But at length the young wife meets and has much confidential talk with one of her own countrymen, who tells her about all that the Russian socialists are thinking and saying and doing in the land of her birth. She recognizes to her horror that the ends and aims, the aspirations and yearnings of the Russian revolutionists are widely different from those of the French and German socialists, and that a great abyss divides her, so far as her thoughts and feelings are concerned, from the husband with whom she used to fancy herself entirely in accord.

A corroborative Russian report indicates further that one of the chief characters was to be a man who seeks the solution of the social problem in a new religion. Turgenev's model for this character was the well-known revolutionary leader, Nikolay Vasilevich Chaikovsky, recently deceased. Fired by religious and social idealism, he went to America in the seventies, with a number of his compatriots, to join an agricultural commune founded in Kansas. He had an unhappy experience there, and subsequently fell in with the Shakers. After a while he left them, to return to Paris, where Turgenev befriended him. In the autumn of 1879, for example, Turgenev was trying to place an article of Chaikovsky's on the religious sects in America. The story goes that in Paris the young man met two Russian girls, sisters, and both medical students, one of whom was betrothed to a Frenchman. Chaikovsky spent hours with the girls in vehement discussion of such subjects as the duty of educated people toward the masses, and this intellectual intercourse, which had, it is true, a faint amorous tinge, nearly resulted in a breaking of the engagement. The affair—Turgenev was informed of it through his association with Chaikovsky—was the germ of the novel in which he hoped to set forth the difference he found between the make-up of his own compatriots and the disposition of those among whom he was now living.

It was almost as though, in his old age, when many men undergo religious conversion, Turgenev grazed the danger of being converted to what he had so long rejected, Russian nationalism. The French had exhausted their stock of spiritual energy and had reached a level of dead uniformity in tastes and ideas. Nothing could reduce Russia, with its rich variety of cultural types, to such a sad state. These sentiments, ascribed to the elderly Turgenev, might better have fallen from the lips of a Herzen. At the dinners of the Five, too, he touched now and then upon the contrast between the two nations. The Latins, he said, were *hommes de la loi,* in whose veins ran the milk of the Roman she-wolf, sticklers for the conventions, conformers to a code, martyrs to an artificial sense of honor. The Russians, on the contrary, were *hommes de l'humanité,* possessed of a warmer social consciousness, irreverent toward man-made rules, rooting for fundamentals, unafraid of the crude, the bare, the simple.

The French, he contended, were too eager to express themselves felicitously to take time to think things through to the end. The Russians, he once said, were liars, because for centuries they had been slaves, but they demanded in art what life had so long refused them—truth and reality.

CHAPTER XXXVI

"AU REVOIR IN AMERICA!"

ERMANY was Turgenev's second fatherland. France came to be his adoptive if somewhat uncongenial home, at which he grumbled with filial freedom. In England he was always a visitor. He had a sound knowledge of English literature: Shakspere he had by heart, Burns he wanted to introduce to his compatriots, and Dickens delighted him immeasurably. He considered the English political system a model one, and would gladly have seen Russia follow it. He loved grouse-shooting in Cambridgeshire sufficiently to cross the channel for it several times. On one of these occasions George Eliot, who, according to her second husband, preferred Turgenev's society above that of any other literary man she knew, made a special trip to Six-Mile Bottom to see him. With his gift of familiarity, he won friends not only in London, but at Oxford and Cambridge as well.

He seems not to have met Dickens personally, although the Viardots were acquainted with him, but attended three of his readings in 1863, and was reduced to what he called "the ecstasies of a calf." He wrote in his Reminiscences that Dickens combined "in one person several first-rate actors who make you laugh and cry in turn." Carlyle had conveyed the same impression when he described Dickens's readings as "a whole tragic, comic, heroic theater visible performing under one hat." Turgenev had some commerce with this fellow-enthusiast, with whom he appears to have been in serious

disagreement on more controversial subjects. He called at the houses of men like Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Madox Brown the painter, and William Spottiswood the mathematician, who in his youth had traveled in Russia. He met Tennyson, and though he did not feel completely at home in the poet's tongue and used a quaint bookish turn of speech absent from his ready French and German, he held his own happily in the conversation. A dinner was given in his honor, at which Trollope, Walter Besant, and James Payn were among those present. Yet his personal connections with the English remained tenuous. He described to Foeth the impressions he carried away from his visit in 1878 in these terms: "Marvelous, queer, grandiose, stupid, all in one, but chiefly something wholly alien to us."

The one Englishman with whom he was on terms of close acquaintance was his translator, W. R. S. Ralston. He seems to have been the only one of Turgenev's foreign friends who visited him at Spasskoye. This was in the summer of 1870. Ralston had an inquisitive, scholarly turn of mind. On being shown about the village and taken into the peasant cottages, he asked about the names and uses of the subjects he saw there and carefully wrote the information down in the note-book he carried around with him. After Ralston's departure Turgenev received a deputation of peasants who wanted to know when they were to go to England. They had conceived the notion that the Englishman had taken an inventory with a view to transporting them and their household goods to his own country. It took Turgenev a long time, by his own account, to disabuse them of this idea. He did not allow his guest to depart without arranging in his honor a village fête. Foeth, responding to a rhymed invitation, was also present, and left a description of the festival, which appears to have ended in a scarcely bucolic fashion. The tipsy peasants kept clamoring for more vodka, and when colored ribbons were distributed among the women, the crowd became so hilarious that Turgenev, his neighbor, and his amazed Englishman had to run for safety to the balcony of the manor-house.

English appreciation of his work was expressed in the conferring upon him of an honorary degree by Oxford University. It may very well have been Ralston who broached the matter. Early in 1874 Tur-

genev wrote to him: "I would be very much flattered to have a degree conferred upon me by the illustrious University of Oxford, but is it not too ambitious, and would not the public ask: Who is this man, and wherefore this honor?" The degree was conferred five years later. On June 14, 1879, Turgenev was writing to Stasulevich: "Miracles will happen. Tomorrow I am going to Oxford, for the University there decided to confer upon me the degree of . . . Doctor of Common Law." It was thus that he misinterpreted the initials D.C.L. "The honor," he concluded, "is as great as it is unexpected." It is quite plausible that he actually had forgotten the earlier mention of the matter; he had a bad memory for such marks of esteem as were shown him.

He had been made much of at Oxford the previous year, when he was the guest of Max Müller. The scholar was rather doubtful as to whether it was proper for him, as a regius professor, to entertain a man who had publicly shown disrespect to her Majesty the Queen. In the summer of 1876, when the papers were full of the Bulgarian atrocities, Turgenev, spending a sleepless night on the train between Moscow and Petersburg, composed a fantasy in verse which held up to scorn Queen Victoria's pro-Turkish policy. The ladies at Windsor are playing the then fashionable game of croquet under the eyes of the queen, who is horrified to see the balls turn into bloodied heads. Retiring to her castle, she finds the hem of her gown soaked in gore, and implores the rivers of England to clean it, only to be told by the poet that no waters will wash out the stain of that innocent blood. "Croquet at Windsor," as he called this execrable piece, though barred by the censorship, was widely circulated, being recited even at the parties of the heir apparent, and was translated into German, French, and English. Not, be it noted, that Turgenev was swept off his feet by the wave of patriotism which seized the country on the eve of the Russo-Turkish conflict. Indeed, deeply as he felt for the Bulgars, he was one of the few people who were out of sympathy with the war. He had no feeling of racial solidarity with the other Slavs, and did not, so he said, consider Mohammedanism inferior to Christianity.

When he came to Oxford, feeling against Russia was still running high in England, and he feared that there might be some unfriendly

demonstration against him as a Russian. But nothing untoward occurred. The late James Bryce, then regius professor of civil law, who introduced Turgenev to the Vice-Chancellor of the University, is said by "The Oxford Journal" to have spoken of "Mr. I. Turgenev's wonderful genius which was shown in his romances, and his description of Russian life, which had led to the emancipation of the serfs." At the same time a like honor was conferred upon John Ruskin, Sir Fredrick Leighton, the ambassador at St. Petersburg, and the Governor of Fiji.

Turgenev's broad shoulders carried the gorgeous gown with dignity, but he could not help a private chuckle at the notion that he was now a doctor of law,—he was a little hazy as to whether it was common or natural, and as a matter of fact it was civil law,—he who was unable to transact the simplest ordinary business. Two months later the French Government similarly honored him by making him an officer of public instruction. "It appears," he wrote, in thanking Flaubert's niece for her congratulations, "that this gives one the right to wear a violet ribbon—violet, mind you, not red. I 'll pin it on the doctoral gown I got at Oxford, which is a very bright red; the two colors will go together perfectly."

Turgenev's interest in the Anglo-Saxon world was not confined to England. It was probably a polite exaggeration when he told an American visitor in Paris that it was an *idée fixe* with him to visit the United States and see the great republic for himself, but the New World did touch his imagination. From the end of the sixties on, many Russians found an extraordinary attraction in American life and institutions, and not a few crossed the Atlantic with the notion of settling in the States, there to lead the good life which political restrictions made impossible at home. These so-called "Americans" planned to live in communal fashion on the land, work with their hands, and eschew the evils of private property and urban existence. Turgenev's interest in the country was of a different order. What he admired was the industrial activities of the practical-minded citizenry and their democratic institutions, which seemed to him the best insurance of the liberty of the individual. To such Americans as came to pay their respects to him in Paris—by the time he had settled there his name was beginning

to be familiar to readers in Boston and New York—he was the friendliest of hosts. One of these visitors from the States was Hjalmar H. Boyesen, later professor of Germanic languages and literatures at Columbia University. During the summer of 1873 he came several times to the apartment on rue de Douai, in a spirit of awe and admiration, and set down their conversations in some detail.

America was a great topic with them. The youthful guest, referring to Dickens's first trip to Yankee-Doodledom, observed that if Turgenev carried out his intention of going there, he might react to the States in the same adverse way. Where there was freedom of thought and speech, Turgenev replied, abuses were bound to appear on the surface and it was easy to discover them, but, for himself, his prejudice was all in America's favor. He went on to mention a talk he had had with Carlyle and how the Scot had thundered against democracy and expressed "very unreserved . . . sympathy with Russia and her emperor." It was wearisome, Carlyle had said, to see how in a country like Great Britain "every petty individual could thrust forth his head like a frog and quack away at his contemptible sentiment as long as anybody had a mind to listen to him." Turgenev had wished that Carlyle might spend a month or two in one of the interior provinces of Russia. Why, the very value of American institutions was the wide scope they offered to "individual development."

Ibsen's name coming up in this connection, Boyesen observed that it was because of his pessimism that the playwright was no democrat: a true democrat "must have perfect faith in his kind." Lacking that faith, Ibsen could say that he would lose his self-respect if he were to find himself with the crowd in any vital matter.

"I should say," countered Turgenev, "that there is always the possibility that the minority may be in the right. But that is an exception rather than the rule."

Turgenev surprised Boyesen by his familiarity with American literature, of which they had much to say to each other. Hawthorne he considered "the first literary representative of the New World." "The Scarlet Letter" and "Twice-told Tales" had the flavor of the soil and spoke of a new civilization. He had compliments for

Lowell, whom he had recently met, and his guest had to mention Howells but once, to find on his next visit a copy of "Venetian Life" lying on Turgenev's table. Turgenev touched on Bret Harte, too, a writer of sterling qualities whom, he feared, prosperity had spoilt. And he spoke with warmth of Walt Whitman; there was good grain, he said, to be found in all that chaff. He seems to have discovered the poet the previous year. Having promised to send a short piece to "The Week" (*Nedelya*), and having nothing on hand, he decided to give the editor, as he wrote to Annenkov, "several translations of lyrical poems by the remarkable American poet, Walt Whitman (have you heard of him?) with a little introduction. You cannot imagine anything more striking." Annenkov became interested, and wanted to see the material, but illness interfered, the translations were "stranded on a sand-bank," and in the end nothing came of the project.

About his own work Turgenev spoke with his usual expansiveness. The young American said that his host's tales had so entered into his life that he could no longer distinguish between the impressions they had created and those which belonged to the actual world. That was precisely, Turgenev exclaimed, what he was aiming at!

"I never try to improve on life; I merely try to see and understand it. . . . Every line I have written has been inspired by something that has actually happened to me or come within my observation."

Of course, he seldom found "a pure type"; his protagonists were like composite photographs. And how they dogged him, until he had them in hand! If he was reading, they would whisper their opinions into his ear; if he was promenading, they would criticize every one he met and all he saw and heard. He lacked, as he said Boyesen must have noticed, a "philosophical mind." He saw, and drew conclusions from what he saw. Abstract things suggested themselves to him as concrete pictures; when he could reduce his idea to such a picture, he felt himself master of it. These images became the essence of reality.

"Europe, for instance," he told his visitor, "I often think of as a large, dimly lighted temple, richly and magnificently decorated, but with the dusk hovering beneath its arched ceilings. America

presents itself to my thoughts as a vast fertile prairie, at first sight somewhat barren, but with a glorious dawn breaking on its horizon."

"Au revoir in America!" were the words with which he speeded his parting guest on his way home. Turgenev never got to America. He had to content himself with the stray visitors from the States who waited upon him in Paris. When Emerson was in the French capital they were engaged to dine together, but gout intervened. In 1878 he met the abolitionist, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who was a delegate to the International Literary Congress, over which Turgenev presided with much embarrassment. He spoke warmly to him of his compatriots, naming Emma Lazarus, with whom he had had some correspondence, in addition to Boyesen. Mr. Higginson was charmed by this genial Russian, who "united the fine benignant head of Longfellow with the figure of Thackeray" and whose "winning sweetness of manner . . . surpassed even that of Longfellow." He was disappointed, on looking for a photograph of Turgenev in the Paris shops, to discover that "his name proved totally unfamiliar." These pilgrims from the States were apt to regard him with a reverence which must have struck him as oddly unlike the treatment he was used to at home.

Another of his American devotees was the late Henry Holt. Having published an English translation of several of his works, he not only wrote a very friendly letter to his Russian author, but sent him a check. Turgenev, who had never received or expected to receive anything tangible for translations of his work, was overwhelmed. He wrote to Ralston forthwith, asking him to translate a short piece of his ("Living Relics") which he wished to send to "this phœnix of an editor," together with his photograph, "as a token and a proof of gratitude." America, he added, was "decidedly the land of eccentricities." Of the letter "with the included check" he wrote to Mr. Holt: ". . . Seldom or never has anything during all my literary career given me such unmitigated pleasure. The deep sympathy I always felt for America and the Americans has been accrued by it; and the appreciation of your countrymen, testified by your amiable letter, makes me proud and happy. . . ."

This interchange occurred in the winter of 1874. Five years later Mr. Holt was summering in Paris, and Turgenev invited him

to his apartment. The publisher's reminiscences give a brief account of that meeting, with Turgenev leaning over the rail of the circular staircase to greet the young friend from the States, who felt, looking up at that "full-bearded, strong, kind face," as though he were "ascending to a prophet." The one remark the American cherished was Turgenev's "I am no puritan."

The publisher was also received at Bougival, and made very much at home there. "He spoke English," Mr. Holt remarks, "better than I did." After a session with the samovar, they went into the novelist's bedroom, the windows of which gave on a fine view. His visitor commenting on the landscape, Turgenev replied that it made no impression on him. The visitor expostulated: did n't every one of the great scenes in his novels have an appropriate natural background?

"Well," he said, "I had n't realized it. So far as I know myself, if all being were arranged in an orderly progression from inanimate matter up to the highest thought and feeling, my interest would begin where conscious life begins."

There was an American with whom Turgenev's contacts were less casual than passing acquaintance,—a young fellow-craftsman, Henry James. Not that there is evidence of his having been particularly impressed by the young man, either as a personality or as an artist. His graciousness had in it a touch of condescension. He wrote to Ralston in 1875 to try to make friends with James, describing him as "a very amiable, sensible, and gifted man, with a tendency toward *tristesse* which will not frighten you." And seven years later, again writing to Ralston, he says that he has had a visit from James, who "is as amiable as ever, but has grown very fat." Turgenev found that some of James's pages were written with the hand of a master, but the American was probably justified in fearing that his tales struck the Russian as "having on the surface too many little flowers and knots of ribbon, of being not quite meat for men."

James's references to Turgenev were not free from such hollow notions as "Slav imagination," "Slav languor." There are other indications that in writing about his senior, he spun things out of a reverent fancy. Yet in some ways the young American showed a penetrating insight into Turgenev's work and character. "To de-

scribe him in the fewest terms," James wrote even before they had met, "he is a story-teller who has taken notes. . . . If we are not mistaken, he notes down an idiosyncracy of character, a fragment of talk, an attitude, a feature, a gesture, and keeps it, if need be, for twenty years, till just the moment for using it comes." And again: ". . . He has no recognition of unembodied ideas; an idea, with him, is such and such an individual, with such and such a nose and chin, such and such a hat and waistcoat, bearing the same relation to it as the look of the printed word does to its meaning." This is uncannily like what Turgenev said of himself. He was a realist, certainly, as were these "grandsons of Balzac"; but James seems to have felt, too, that he was to a degree like his unfortunate hero, Nezhdanov in "Virgin Soil," "a romanticist of realism"; one who looked at life steadily, but who could not help gagging when he thought of swallowing it whole. He was inclined to leave the difficult, sordid, tawdry aspect of things out of the picture. That tendency toward *tristesse* which Turgenev found in James, the latter recognized in him: "The element of melancholy in his nature was deep and constant." James comprehended, too, Turgenev's attitude toward his distant, repellant, seductive native land. "Turgenev gives us a peculiar sense of being out of harmony with his native land. . . . He loves the old and he is unable to see where the new is drifting. . . ." And again: "Turgenev strikes us . . . as a man disappointed . . . in the land which is dear to him. . . . The fermentation of social change has thrown to the surface in Russia a deluge of hollow pretensions and vicious presumptions, amid which the love either of old virtues or of new achievements finds very little gratification."

Those Sunday afternoons at Flaubert's, in the "little salon at the top of a house at the end of Faubourg Saint Honoré," where, James says, "Turgenev's beautiful faculty of talk showed at its best," clarified for the younger man his view of this "most approachable, most practicable, least unsafe man of genius" it was his fortune to meet. "Our Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, moralistic, conventional standards were far away from him," James says. But during those hours in that company the young man could not help feeling that the Russian, like himself, was somewhat distressed by the equally rigid,

if so differently oriented standards of the French school, as regards the art that all of them were practising.

It was not only at Flaubert's that James saw him. He visited Turgenev more than once in his "little green sitting-room" in the Viardot house. What he noted here particularly was the immense divan, so huge that smaller persons than Turgenev "had to lie upon it rather than sit," and a few choice specimens of French painting, notably a fine Rousseau. There were also visits to that "very pretty domain," Bougival, where Turgenev's library had the same simple effect—few books, a vast divan, and several valuable canvases. Best memory of all, perhaps, was that of a certain Parisian *déjeuner* in "a new sumptuous café in the Avenue de l'Opéra," where the two men sat talking from noon till late dusk:

> The gray damp of a Parisian December . . . made the dark interior of the café look more and more rich and hospitable, while the light faded, the lamps were lit, the habitués came in to drink absinthe and play their afternoon game of dominoes, and we still lingered over our morning meal. Turgenev talked almost exclusively about Russia, the nihilists, the remarkable figures that came to light among them, the curious visits he received, the dark prospects of his native land.

The two writers were to have more in common than either one of them could then appreciate. Turgenev was in his grave when James was writing to Stevenson, "I want to leave a multitude of pictures of my time—so that the number may constitute a total having a certain value as observation and testimony." This was the essence of Turgenev's effort. James, like Turgenev, was, in the phrase of Edmund Gosse, "essentially a homeless man." Both felt that the home scene was fading from them, and that, as James has it, they "could trust [it] for effect no longer." Both had to see themselves, in the home newspapers, lampooned as renegades. But Turgenev's expatriation came too late in life to orphan his work. He did not "attempt to project himself into an atmosphere" in which he had no "transmitted and inherited property." He might for a time hang up his harp on a willow tree in a strange land, but he did not forget Jerusalem, and his right hand never forgot its cunning.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE RETURN OF THE NATIVE

THE lesson learned from the failure of "Virgin Soil," Turgenev wrote to his brother, would not be lost on him: his literary career had come to its final end; his name would never again appear under any original work. "Diderot," he observed, "said somewhere that 'before death one several times attends his own funeral'; so I too have been reduced to walking behind my literary coffin. I will find some other occupation for myself, and then the last of old age will come and the daily petty cares connected with the preservation of life will absorb all other interests." Even before his entire novel appeared in print he had begun the avowals of abdication which came in the wake of each of his books. He had done his bell-ringing, and it was time for him to climb down from the belfry. "Enough!" When he was preparing to go to Petersburg at the end of May, 1877, he felt that he would n't stay there long: ". . . There everything smells to me of literature; and I have conceived a sufficient disgust for it lately . . ." He has no desire to write. It seems strange for him to think that he had once been a man of letters.

While he was thus protesting, two new stories appeared over his name, one of which—and by far the better of the two—"The Story

of Father Alexis," was written after "Virgin Soil." Thereafter he held his peace for nearly four years. When he did take up his pen again, it was not to resume the chronicling of his times. Out of the cedar chests of memory he drew the materials for two character sketches, "Old Portraits" (1881) and "A Reckless Character" (1882). The first belongs with the best of his pages. It is a sober evocation of the days when serfdom was in flower, and, while conveying all the charm of a patriarchal past, refuses to gloss over its horrors. Its excellence is in sharp contrast with the helplessness of another piece published the same year, "A Song of Triumphant Love," which is in effect a wretched pasticcio of an Italian novella. The year before his death he attempted a Poesque theme in the story "Clara Milich," and reluctantly handed to his avid publisher a sheaf of papers which he called "Senilia—An Old Man's Jottings." These sheets, varying in size and color, corresponded, he explained, to the cartoons an artist sketches for a large canvas, and he was surrendering them as a sign that he had given up all thought of writing, and with some idea of posthumous publication. He was, however, persuaded to allow fifty of them to appear at once.

The title "Poems in Prose," which was bestowed on the collection by the editor of the review in which they appeared, is not a happy one. Most of the pieces lack utterly the pitch and accent and pattern of poetry. The personal, lyrical quality which some of them possess is generally blighted by a weakness for the allegorical and the sententious. A few read like leaves from a novelist's note-book, but even those, though not lacking in excellent touches, wear gratuitous moral tags. Several of them are transcriptions of actual experiences. Such a one is the piece about an evening party at which the guests' faces are suddenly transformed into death's-heads. He told a friend that he had suffered from a similar hallucination for months.

He described these anecdotes and character sketches, these parables and maxims, these day-dreams and nightmares as "the last groans of an old man." And while not all of them answer to this description, many of them revolve about such themes as the horror of extinction, the futility of life, the indifference of Nature to human values, the nostalgia for lost youth, the vain longing for a home, the hopeless reaching out after the consolations of religion. These are

familiar motifs, and so are his references to the enigma of Russia, his emphasis on the abyss between the Russian masses and the Russian intellectuals, and his little hymn to "the great, mighty, just and free Russian language," with which the series concludes.

What kept him from writing was not so much the invectives of the critics and the indifference of the public, nor even his blunted responsiveness to new impressions, but rather, he repeated, the fact that living abroad almost constantly as he did, he was "unable to make diligent and close observations of Russian life, which, besides, was getting more and more complicated with every year." As a matter of fact, the tangle of Russian affairs was just then being resolved into a clearly drawn conflict. It was natural for Turgenev to be confounded by this spectacle, because it was increasingly difficult to remain a passive observer. "Going to the people" having failed of its purpose, the revolutionists adopted the tactics of terrorism. At first their acts of violence were committed in self-defense or in revenge for the harsh treatment accorded their comrades. But soon they began to use the revolver and the bomb against individuals in high places, for political ends. They hoped either to frighten the Government into granting concessions or to throw such confusion into the enemy's ranks as to be enabled to seize power. The warfare between the terrorists and the Government was initiated with the shot fired by Vera Zasulich at General Trepov in January, 1878, and culminated in the assassination of the czar on March 1, 1881.

Turgenev watched this new turn of events with absorption. His foreign residence was a real help to him here. He could entertain some sort of relations with the revolutionists without actually compromising himself. Of course, he shuddered at their monstrous acts and could not approve their aims, but at the same time he was drawn to them because of their heroism, their singleness of purpose, their selfless devotion to a cause. He naturally belonged with those who kept to the middle of the road. He was, as he liked to call himself, a "dynastic liberal," and could not imagine any salutary reforms except such as would be granted by the existing authorities. The report of the attempt on the czar in 1879 struck him as "abominable news."

At the same time he continued to associate with as many hotheads

as came his way in Paris. What is more significant, he sometimes gave them aid and comfort. Thus, he contributed five hundred francs annually for at least three years to the support of an underground journal issued from a Geneva press by Lavrov. This did not prevent him from publicly denying any connection with Lavrov when the man was deported by the French government. It is equally characteristic that he asked Lavrov's forgiveness, and got it. When the young Prince Kropotkin escaped from a Russian prison, Turgenev suggested that the event be celebrated with a dinner. He cultivated this young man. He gave him "Virgin Soil" to read in proof. He took him along to Antokolsky's studio, to see the newly finished statue of Christ Before the People. He insisted that Kropotkin get up on a ladder to view the sculpture from above, so that he could note the strength, the scorn and the hatred in this Messiah. "He must see it!" Turgenev cried, "he's a revolutionist!" It is said that he kept on his desk pictures of the executed terrorists, and kissed the photographs of the heroic women condemned in the so-called Trial of the Fifty, the flesh-and-blood sisters of his Yelena and his Marianna.

In the winter of 1879 he met the heir apparent, the future Alexander III, and his spouse, at a party given by the Russian ambassador in Paris, and to his "great joy" he found the heir "open-minded, honest and kind" and his wife "very charming." This was his comment to a friend who was a respectable citizen and a censor, to boot. To Lavrov he spoke of the heir's "limited outlook, ignorance and awkwardness" and reported that the future empress of all the Russias had expressed regret to him because he wrote in Russian. His natural inclination, perhaps intelligible in a novelist, to identify himself with the person he was addressing, is nowhere better exemplified.

From 1876 until 1882, when he was too ill to move, not a year passed without his spending some part of it in Russia. He took advantage of his visits home to study the new phase of the social movement, as, for example, by attending one of the numerous political trials which afforded the outside world its clearest glimpses of underground activities. The new novel he was thinking of,—for he would not be done with writing until he was done with living,—while it was to revolve around the conflict in outlook between individuals

of different nationalities, was also to present the new type of revolutionist, one who bore no traces of Nezhdanov's Hamletism.

He seems to have had in mind a sequel to "Virgin Soil," which would do justice to the men who, with complete sacrifice of every private desire and personal ambition, gave themselves to the cause. Hearing that news of this literary plan had gotten into the French and German papers, he wrote in November, 1881, that he was not yet considering it seriously, adding in his wistful way, "Will new leaves and branches spring from the old, dry tree?" It has been asserted by a man who was acquainted with him that the novel was actually written, at least in part, but the manuscript has not come to light. It is more probable that he did not go beyond dictating the names of the characters to Mme. Viardot as he lay on his deathbed.

He did not always return to the great steppes for what Henry James enviously described as "a strengthening bath," and what he himself spoke of as a dip in "potent waters." His trip of 1879, for example, was undertaken for no less prosaic a reason than to obtain the legacy bequeathed him by his lately deceased brother. Nicholas died early in the year. It was not a bereavement that affected Turgenev vitally: they had had nothing in common, had seen each other rarely, and their letters had for the most part been either catalogues of their respective ailments or accounts of financial affairs. And yet, as Turgenev wrote to Flaubert, "a brother may be less than a friend, but he represents something different, something less strong and more intimate." Now there was no one left with whom to share the memories of their common childhood. Besides, the passing of a person, who, however uncongenial to him, was bound to him by the ties of blood, was a pointed intimation of his own mortality. And so his sorrow was "retrospective and personal." Nicholas had left him a quarter of a million francs, willing the remainder of his large fortune to his relatives-in-law. Since they were "a thievish sort," Turgenev thought he had to be on the spot if he was to get his inheritance.

His brother's death was merely a contributing cause to his depression. He was, as he told Flaubert, leading the retired life of a mole, alone, quite alone, and idle. In February he was in Petersburg, and for once a friendly Fate surprised him. Coming from the shadow

of the sad Parisian winter, and for no more exalted purpose than to claim his share of his brother's fortune, he suddenly found himself in the warm sunlight of public favor. His eight weeks' visit to the two capitals was in the nature of a triumph. He passed from the arms of one group of enthusiasts to those of another. He was dined and wined and crowned with laurel wreaths. He made speeches and received eulogistic addresses. At one gathering a young man read a poem begging him, in the name of the younger generation, to pay longer visits to Russia. His rooms at the Hôtel d'Europe in Petersburg were like a public thoroughfare, what with the endless coming and going of all manner of people, among whom the youth figured largely. The very girls who six months earlier had anathematized him for "Virgin Soil," now "shrieked like young jackdaws at dusk," as an eye-witness observed, in delight over an autographed copy of the same novel.

He gave readings from his works, and even when he mumbled and stumbled the audience acclaimed him with endless plaudits. One eager young woman broke a window-pane in her anxiety to catch a glimpse of him, and at the end of another public appearance he had to be rescued from a cheering mob of university students by a police officer, who, all the time that he was dragging Turgenev away from them, kept protesting to the crowd that he was an ardent admirer of his talent. How often did he wish that he might cast aside, at one stroke, his fame and the years that had brought it to him, and be merely one of these anonymous hot-blooded boys who surged forward to do him honor?

There were a few flies in the ointment. Once when Dostoyevsky was also on the platform, part of the audience slighted Turgenev by clearly showing more attention to the author of "The Possessed." Furthermore, Turgenev could not help noticing that the extreme left did not participate in the festivities. And yet it seemed as though he had effected a genuine reconciliation with the educated class to which he belonged and whose chronicler he was content to be. The tremendous acclaim rejoiced him the more because it took him by surprise. He had always been inclined to exaggerate his unpopularity at home, and by the same token had ignored the signs of the steady growth of his reputation. As early as 1874 his name

was familiar even to an attendant who waited upon him in the public baths, and the same year two young artisans came up to him while he was waiting for his train at a railway station, and having assured themselves that he was the author of "A Sportsman's Sketches," bared their heads, and bowing from the waist, thanked him in the name of the Russian people, disappearing before the astounded man could find his voice. He had become, without truly realizing it, a classic, and his work was offering to an increasingly large body of readers that light and heat and strength which he himself sought in vain. His novels, in the words of one Russian critic, had become fashion journals which set the style in manners and morals, and, as another observes, the conversation in them was, for several decades, the conversation in every Russian drawing-room, bedroom, and study.

Turgenev appreciated that the ovations he was receiving were at once an expression of homage to himself and something in the nature of an oblique political demonstration. The failure of Russian diplomacy at the Berlin Congress, the unrestrained rule of the bureaucrats, and the severe repression of political heterodoxy, coupled with the fact that Russian arms had secured a constitution for Bulgaria, combined to stir up strong popular resentment against the Government. Just then the liberals had been further aroused by the czar's appeal to the people for help against "a handful of evil-doers," as the manifesto referred to the terrorists. In reply some of the more forward-looking zemstvos had demanded internal reforms.

The progressives turned the meetings in Turgenev's honor into thinly disguised liberal rallies, whereat he readily connived. In an after-dinner speech in Moscow he said that he was being applauded not as a writer, but rather as the exponent of the liberal ideas to which he had clung since his youth. And speaking at the great dinner given him by the academic and literary world of Petersburg, he made a reference to "the crowning of the edifice," a phrase which every one recognized as a euphemism for a constitution. The report was circulated and recorded in an underground newspaper that he was appealed to as the one man who could unite all the forces of the opposition, the one to whom both fathers and children would lis-

ten, and that he virtually agreed to accept the burden, since, he said, there were no younger shoulders to carry it.

The banqueting played havoc with his digestion, and he returned to Paris disabled with gout. But morally he was refreshed. He almost began to believe in himself as a political force. He even communicated his faith to one of his acquaintances. The German ambassador to France, in whose presence he analyzed the Russian situation, wrote in his diary that if he were Alexander II, he would entrust the formation of a cabinet to the novelist. Turgenev could not take his mind off affairs at home. He was no sooner back in Paris than he complained, with more than his usual wistfulness, of "the burden of living abroad." A man could n't straddle two countries, with one foot in each. He would have to return to Russia for good. "But it is hard," he could n't help adding, "to tear oneself away from what one has grown accustomed to, here." In August he was writing to Flaubert that he had decided to go home, not to work, but simply to breathe his native air. And curiously, his decision had cured him of the nervous exasperation which had been consuming him. "Laugh if you please, but the idea of plunging into that morass up to my neck has calmed me." The end of the year found his determination unshaken. Russia was passing through a dark period. One could n't, conscientiously, remain an outsider. Now at the age of sixty-two, he was going to his native country for the first time, as he wrote to Tolstoy, without thinking of when he would return to Paris, and indeed not wishing to return soon.

The visit that he made in 1880 was indeed of extraordinary duration. He reached Petersburg early in February and did not leave Russia until nearly the middle of July. During these months he went through the usual course of public dinners, attacks of gout, and readings for charity, and he also took a leading part in the ceremonies connected with the unveiling of a monument to his idol, Pushkin. Of political activity there is scarcely a trace. The nearest approach to it was his effort to make some contact with the extreme left in the confraternity of letters. He braved the snow and three flights of stairs to meet a group of writers who were publishing coöperatively a radical review. He arrived late, as usual, and found the company

having tea. The group included as well a scientist in a working-blouse stained with acids.

Turgenev tried to be agreeable, but the frost was not all on the windows. His companions were likely to recall that though a terrorist's account of his prison experience, published in Paris, had had the benefit of a preface by Turgenev, the novelist had followed up this friendly office by an open letter in which he referred to terrorist activities as "abominations," and said that he had always, on principle, been opposed to revolution. They were acutely aware of a gap between him and them, and could n't help making him feel it. They were commoners, who from the start had had to struggle for a living. He had lived richly by the labor of thousands of slaves. Their hair was black, but under his silver mop his face seemed fresher than their careworn faces. His mere physical bulk made them feel like pygmies; even seated, he towered head and shoulders above them, so that his genial talk seemed to flow down as from a height, and his great gestures threatened to push apart the walls of the narrow room.

In the chilly air, he gave himself over to reminiscence, until one of the young men, his voice trembling with eagerness, rose to put the bold question: "What do you think of the state of affairs in our country? Are n't we on the eve of a revolution? Are n't we just where France was on the eve of 1789?" This young man, like not a few others, was somewhat uncertain as to whether the real Government was in the Winter Palace or in the secret headquarters of the People's Will (the terrorist party). Turgenev answered by quietly laying the future on the lap of the gods, and added that a revolution seemed unlikely because the opposition was not united. His opponent retorted that the "extreme progressivists," as Turgenev euphemistically called the revolutionists, were all united, and were indeed the only ones to be reckoned with. Then he launched into an attack on the liberals. The novelist observed with a smile that for really concerted feeling he would have to look back to the forties and fifties, when everyone had been against serfdom. From the question of serfdom it was easy to pass to "A Sportsman's Sketches," and thence to hunting. It happened that the young man

in the stained blouse was a passionate hunter. The dangerous topic was not referred to again.

There was another gathering at which Turgenev was asked point-blank whether one should join the terrorists or "go to the people." "I see," he said after a moment, "that young people are still preoccupied with the question of what 's to be done. It 's for them to answer. As for me, I only visit Russia now and then, and I don't undertake to solve complicated political problems." Already the prodigal had ceased to think of his return as permanent. "But," he ventured, "it 's obvious that 'going to the people' has been a failure." The abstractions of socialism, he observed, could have no meaning for the peasant, who lived in a world of simple concrete things. In the end he was to lose faith in reforms from above, although he never gained any confidence in revolutionary tactics.

Of all the events that marked these five months in Russia, what stood out most sharply were the three crowded June days in Moscow dedicated to Pushkin's memory. There were moments during the festivities when it almost seemed as though they were in honor of Turgenev, rather than in honor of his master; as when the Minister of Education embraced him on the platform of the great hall of the university, after the rector had declared him an honorary member of the academic body, and the audience broke into thunders of applause. And again when, in the dazzling White Hall of the Noblemen's Club (where forty-three years later the body of Lenin was to lie in state), Pisemsky, a heavy man with the clumsy air of a peasant, took the laurel wreath with which Turgenev had just crowned the bust of Pushkin and made a gesture as though to place it upon Turgenev's head, and once more the public crashed its approbation. And then came the moment when the audience rustled into silence, to hear Turgenev read aloud the speech in praise of Pushkin which he had composed in the solitude of Spasskoye.

He stood before the crowd, wearing on his person a lock of the poet's hair, bearing in his heart a love for Pushkin's verse that affected him physically; he would have given his two little fingers for a single line of "Yevgeny Onyegin." Had n't Zhukovsky's son presented him with the poet's signet-ring with the curious Hebrew in-

scription, in recognition of the fact that he was the spiritual heir of the man who fathered Russian literature, that he was carrying on the Pushkin tradition of light and grace and reason? Yet his sober, subtle, critical appreciation, stressing the æsthetic rather than the moral aspect of the man's work, was not calculated to rouse the emotions of his expectant auditors. How far he fell short he realized when, the day after his address, Dostoyevsky delivered his speech which shook this gathering, under the auspices of the Society of Lovers of Russian Literature, as the crowds in the Duomo were once shaken by the storm of Savonarola's eloquence. Even Turgenev, inimical as ever to Dostoyevsky's passionate wrongheadedness, and slightly humbled by this climax, was swept off his feet.

At the conclusion of the exercises, a number of people came up to Turgenev to press his hand. Some of them begged him to remain in Russia. He did not. But he did return for another long visit the next spring, after having given his blessing to Marianne Viardot's union with a pianist named Duvernoy. Alexander II had just been "executed" by the revolutionists, and the flurry caused by the regicide seems to have stirred again Turgenev's vague political ambitions. He immediately contributed an anonymous article to *La Revue Politique,* in which he gave a rather flattering picture of the new czar, made a remarkably penetrating forecast of his policies, and after indicating that he probably would not grant a constitution, expressed the pious wish that the liberals might persuade him to do so. It is reported that Gambetta, whom Turgenev called "the new Pericles," approached him on the subject of France's future relations with Russia. However that may have been, when he reached Petersburg people in high places did not rush to invite him into the councils of state. Quite the contrary. Pobedonostzev, who was already a power at the court, hinted broadly to a friend of Turgenev's that the latter's presence in the capital was undesirable, for if the liberals turned his head again, who knew what might come of it in these troubled times?

Although this message never reached Turgenev's ears, he had the uneasy conviction that he was under police surveillance both here and in France, where he claimed to be known to the secret service as *le loup blanc.* He did not feel safe in the capital, he

told his friends, only half in jest. But at Spasskoye he was hardly better off. In the prevailing confusion, almost anything could happen. A practical joker might send a written order to the local authorities: "Please hang the landowner, Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev." And forthwith he would be hanged by his own peasants. The droll idea seems to have taken hold of him. He elaborated it with gusto to Polonsky, who reported it as a day-dream of Turgenev's:

We sit on the balcony one fine morning and quietly sip our tea, and suddenly we notice a crowd of local peasants coming toward us from the church across the garden. As usual they take off their caps and bow, and when I ask, "What do you want, brothers?" they reply: "Don't be angry at us, little father, we are not to blame. You're a good master and we're very well satisfied. Still, whether we like it or not, we shall have to hang you. And while we're at it, we might as well hang him, too," pointing to Polonsky. "What?" "Yes, quite so. Those are the orders, little father. We have the rope ready, too. You'd better say your prayers now. We're no murderers, you know; we're human beings. We can wait a little."

During the three or four months of 1881 that he was in Russia Turgenev spent most of the time on his estate. He entertained a number of guests, and managed to do a little work. By August he was writing to a friend: "Although in the flesh I am still here, mentally I am already in Paris, and I feel that a French skin is growing under my Russian skin, which is beginning to slough off. In the spring, the process will be reversed." Two more springs were left him for the Russian skin to renew itself. But when he saw the green roof of the old manor-house melt, as he drove off, into the green of the August landscape, it was for the last time. Nor did he ever see again the colored cupolas of Moscow, or again hobble through the giddy parade on the Nevsky.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

RECONCILIATION

NE May day in 1878 Turgenev received a letter addressed in a handwriting which he had not seen for seventeen years. It was a note in which Tolstoy held out the olive-branch. Having just passed through a moral crisis, and feeling himself, since seven times seven years had gone over his head, a new man, he desired reconciliation in a spirit of Christian good-will with all whom he had offended or from whom he had suffered offense. He was certain, he wrote, that so kind a man as Turgenev had forestalled him in forgetting their old enmity, and he concluded by declaring his indebtedness to his senior for such fame as he had then achieved.

This last statement was a gesture of exaggerated humility, and yet Turgenev had done more than Tolstoy perhaps realized to make him known in the West. As the self-appointed promoter of Russian letters abroad, he had interested himself particularly in pushing Tolstoy's work, in spite of his break with the author. It is reported that when Charles Edmond suggested to Turgenev that the Paris *Temps* would welcome a contribution from him, he took Edmond to his rooms, and handed him, as the choicest possible offering, a manuscript translation of Tolstoy's "Sebastopol Tales." He was n't, he added, worthy to unloose the latchet of this man's shoes.

Not that his admiration was unqualified. When the first instalment of "War and Peace" appeared, he found it dry and tiresome, obviously the product of a memory that fastened upon small irrelevant details, and full of petty psychologizing which was out of place in a work of epic proportions. By the time the fourth volume was out, he was ready to concede that the book contained passages which would live as long as the Russian language, and indeed, that therewith Tolstoy moved up to the first place among the writers of his country, and in fact of all Europe. The passages in which Tolstoy sat awkwardly enough on his philosophic hobby-horse irritated and angered Turgenev beyond measure, yet the genre pictures in the book gave him "the chills and fever of ecstasy." For all its defects, the thing "smelled of life." If only, Turgenev sighed, a matured intelligence were added to this rare talent. He saw no virtue in "Anna Karenina," which seemed to him to present the spectacle of the most gifted writer in Europe stuck in the native swamp of wilful barbarism. He was always finding in Tolstoy's writings and behavior the signs of hostility to the intellect. "War and Peace" was, to his thinking, flawed by it. He believed that the same tendency accounted for the fact that Tolstoy sided with the French in the conflict of 1870: the opinionated wretch abhorred Gallic phrasemongering, but he hated even more the system, the science, the rationality, for which the Germans stood.

Reconciliation was naturally welcome to Turgenev. Many years had passed since he had said that they were to each other as the Montecchi to the Capuletti, and the edge of that feeling had long since worn off. He eagerly accepted the outstretched hand. Three months after Tolstoy's letter reached him, being then on one of his flying trips to Russia, he made a point of going to Yasnaya Polyana. He followed up this visit with another a month later. Several members of the company he found there, including the Countess Tolstoy and the eldest son of the house, Sergey, who was then fifteen, recorded their impressions of the guest.

The boy was struck by the man's gigantic bulk, which dwarfed that of his father, and the yellowish-white hair contrasting with his father's, in which there was n't a gray thread. He recalls the flabby

legs and the wide-toed soft leather boots of a victim of gout, and the velvet jacket and waistcoat, in each pocket of which reposed a marvelous watch. The giant was very proud of them and kept consulting both of them to see if they agreed. Not that he, being after all a Russian, was ever on time. In another pocket he kept an exquisite snuff-box, which, he confessed, his ladies in Paris would not suffer him to use, and he had long since given up smoking because two young girls of whom he was fond refused kisses that smelled of tobacco. He was reduced to smelling-salts as a substitute. Relieving all this velvet was a silk shirt and silk cravat, above which blue eyes beamed kindly from a ruddy face.

The Countess found Turgenev aged, gray and meek, and exhibiting a childish weakness of character. She was charmed, like every one else, by his conversational verve, observing: "He described a statue of Christ by Antokolsky so that we actually saw it, and afterwards told us about his favorite dog, Pegasus, with equal vividness." At table he led the talk, making everybody laugh by mimicking a chicken in the soup and by other parlor tricks. He spoke slightingly of the French people and of the Parisian argot, and took occasion to compliment the young ladies present by contrasting the Russian girl favorably with the French miss. They did not know that two years previously he had described the Russian woman to his French friends as "a *mélange* of simplicity, tenderness, and unconscious depravity." Later he beat his host at chess. His skill with one figure had won him the title of "the chevalier of the bishop."

When the talk turned to literature, he urged Tolstoy to read young Garshin, Guy de Maupassant, and a certain Mme. Stechkina, his literary protégée of the moment, upon whom, as usual, he was wasting his enthusiasm. He was also heard quoting Pushkin at his host, in support of the contention that poetry has a value. Tolstoy confessed to a weakness for Pushkin, but persisted in maintaining that one could express oneself plainly and freely only in prose. But for the most part, Turgenev avoided contentious subjects. He was much with the young people,—the house was full of them,—and showed himself, for a gouty sexagenarian, singularly spry. Sergey reports that once when his father and the guest were out

of doors they found near the house a board balanced on a log, and seating themselves on the ends, began to play see-saw as unconcernedly as school-boys.

Upon reaching Spasskoye after this reunion, Turgenev effected another reconciliation, with Foeth. Four years earlier this exquisite æsthete, who was an eminently hard-headed gentleman farmer, a stout pillar of society, and a virulent reactionary, had spread the rumor that Turgenev was no better than an agitator. Up to that time Turgenev had ignored the politics of his old neighbor and hunting-companion, at whose table he had eaten so many excellent dinners and whose verses he had read with so much gusto, but this personal attack he could not stomach, and he broke with him. And now Foeth followed Tolstoy's example and made a friendly overture in a charming but not very clear letter, adorned with quotations from Kant. Again Turgenev responded warmly, although he never got back to a very secure footing in his further relations with the poet. As in the case of Tolstoy, he was happy over the closing of the breach, but well aware that the old differences had not been conjured away.

After the second visit to Yasnaya Polyana, Tolstoy was writing to a friend: "Turgenev was here again, and was just as charming and brilliant. But, *entre nous,* he is a little like a fountain spouting imported water, and one is always afraid that the jet may be exhausted and the fountain cease playing." To Foeth he wrote at the same time: "He [Turgenev] is the same as ever, and we know the degree of intimacy that is possible between us." The two men wisely refrained from an attempt to exceed this measure, and thereby the relation was saved. The letter which Tolstoy sent after his departed guest was very affectionate, but the recipient was exasperated to find that he was begged never to refer to his friend's writings—perhaps the only thing about Tolstoy in which he was genuinely interested.

God knows, when I reread my work or hear it mentioned, I get a complicated feeling, the chief elements of which are shame and the fear that people are laughing at me. . . . Much as I love you and firmly as I believe that you are well disposed toward me, it seems to

me that you too are making fun of me. And so let 's not talk about my writings any more.

"Every one," Tolstoy continued, referring to the fundamental difference in their way of solving their personal problems, "has his own way of blowing his nose." If his private concern at the time was to seek the good life, he did not presume to enjoin it upon Turgenev, merely wishing him work which he would feel to be worth while, as the only condition of happiness. He concluded:

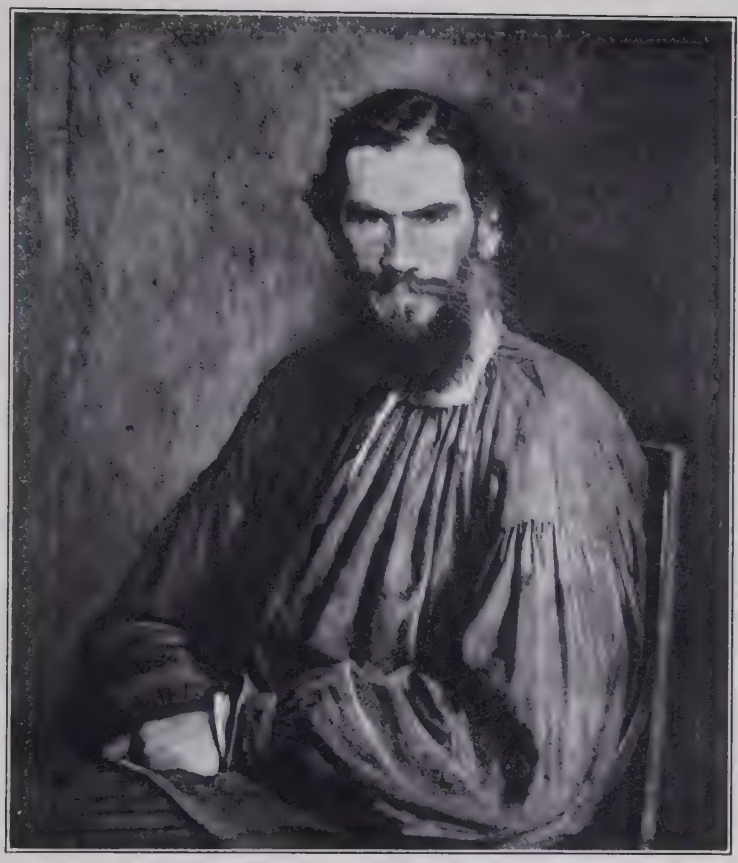
I don't for a minute believe that you have given up writing, because, like an open bottle which has been swung round too quickly to spill, you still hold most of what filled you. The thing is to find an angle at which the fluid can run out quietly; that 's what I wish for you as for myself."

To this Turgenev replied:

Although you asked me not to speak of your writings, I cannot refrain from stating that I never laughed at you, even the least little bit. Some of your works please me a great deal, others I don't like at all. But why should I laugh? I thought that you had long since got rid of such feelings. Why do only men of letters know them, and not painters, musicians, and other artists? Perhaps because there enters into a literary work more of that part of the soul which it 's not comfortable to show to every one.

As for his own work, he wrote, he had given it up because he was not living at home. "At least," he added shrewdly, "I account for my inaction by my residing abroad."

The relations between the two men remained to all intents and purposes cordial. In May, 1880, Turgenev came to Yasnaya Polyana again for a few days. One object of his visit was to persuade Tolstoy to take part in the coming Pushkin celebration at Moscow, but his efforts were vain. He paid his last visit to Yasnaya on his final trip to Russia the following year. As usual he found a houseful of young people, with whom he made merry. On one occasion the members of the party amused themselves by relating in turn their happiest moments in love. Turgenev, being pressed for his, made a contribution which differed sub-



Leo Tolstoy
From a portrait by Kramskoy

stantially from the story which he had told his French friends when the same topic was under discussion. He had, he said, been in love with a girl who, as he thought, did not return his affection, but once he glanced at her and catching her eyes on him, knew that she did. After that the boys and girls kept glancing at one another. He delighted the company by dancing a *cancan* with a twelve-year-old girl—not the vulgar steps of the café-chantant, but the old-fashioned, stately measure. Tolstoy noted in his diary: "Turgenev—*cancan*. Sad."

Turgenev further irritated his host by making fun of one of the master's potential disciples, who discussed the opening of the fourth Gospel with such vehemence that he fell off his chair. The visitor was no great reader of the New Testament, and cared least for St. John. When he confessed as much to a pious second cousin of Tolstoy's, the good old soul could only sigh: "You will never be anything but the most likable of pagans." One day there were thirteen at table, and pleasantries were made about the ominous significance of the number. "All who are afraid of death," cried Turgenev, "raise hands," and lifted his own. Only Tolstoy, out of politeness, followed suit. This was the second time within a few weeks that Turgenev had publicly declared the fear that haunted him. The previous month his present host, who was then a visitor at Spasskoye, had heard the same thing from his lips.

"How can it be that Turgenev is not afraid to be afraid of death?" Tolstoy commented, in a letter referring to the matter. He himself knew the chill of that terror well enough. It had led him, one night in an Arzamas tavern,—him, blessed with genius and health and children and chattels,—to the brink of suicide. This fear was perhaps the very root of the unease from which he had found refuge in the faith and the way of life of the masses. In fact, he had come to Spasskoye fresh from a pilgrimage which he had made on foot, so that he might the better identify himself with the common folk. As he stood at Turgenev's door, paying the driver who had brought him there, it looked as though one peasant were paying another. The visit over, Tolstoy made this entry in his diary: "Turgenev fears the name of God, but acknowledges Him. . . . Lives in luxury and idleness."

Turgenev read Tolstoy's "Confession," the first piece begotten of his conversion, which was sent to him by the author, and prudently avoided expressing his opinion of it, for fear, as he wrote in his letter of acknowledgment, of "falling into an argumentative tone." He did, however, urge him to resume work, as though a piece like "Confession" were negligible as literature. He conceded that a man must first of all lead a good life, but he insisted that this should not interfere with the writing of good books. To prod Tolstoy further, he went so far as to exalt his literary labors into a mission. To others Turgenev spoke of the "Confession" without mincing words. What a pity, he told the lady who brought him a copy of it, to see a talent like that wasted on such nonsense! As though Tolstoy were the first to discover these platitudes about life and death!

And he recalled how one day, strolling through the meadows at Yasnaya Polyana, the two of them had come upon an aged nag at grass, and how the host had gone up to it and stroked it and talked to it gently, telling his companion just what the creature was thinking and feeling, until Turgenev in a transport cried out: "You must have been a horse once, yourself!" That was the sort of thing he should be doing, instead of trying to climb into the pulpit. "The thing is remarkable," he allowed in a letter, "for its sincerity, truthfulness and force of conviction, but it is all built on false premises and leads to the most gloomy negation of human life. . . . This too is a kind of Nihilism." To his friend's elderly cousin who had called him a pagan he said that it was a pity that Lev Nikolaevich had abandoned literature to write "such trash" as his ethico-religious tracts.

Tolstoy justified Turgenev's worst apprehensions. What the latter had feared was that the proselyte would cart into literature the Scriptures, commentaries, and homilies which formed his chief reading matter after his conversion. Having found a faith in which to rest, Tolstoy was then busy shelling out the kernel of true ethical Christianity from the age-old husks of mysticism and theology. At Yasnaya Polyana, in 1880, the master of the house showed Turgenev the results of his most recent labors. "[He] has written," the unenthusiastic guest confided to a friend shortly

afterwards, "a whole heap of papers. He has a trunkful of these mystico-ethical disquisitions and various pseudo-critical interpretations. He read me some of this stuff, which I simply do not understand . . . I told him: 'That 's not the real thing,' but he replied: 'It is just the real thing.' "

To the end the two men remained antipathetic. What was real and precious to the one was unreal and worthless to the other. Turgenev could not breathe comfortably in Tolstoy's moral universe, and Tolstoy felt that Turgenev had no moral universe to breathe in. The one would have had the flesh follow on the leash of the soul. The other, being of less abundant vitality, was generally able to keep his natural impulses within the bounds of the good taste which was part of his make-up, and so accepted them fearlessly. Faced with the problem of personal extinction, one worked out his salvation by submitting his ego to the group consciousness, by stepping back into the sheltering warmth of huddled, primitive humanity. The other, as jealous of his distinct, separate individuality as he was sure of its annihilation, could find no such refuge. "Non-existence is a black abyss; impersonal immortality is a white abyss," he is said to have observed. And so the small flame of his fortitude was blown upon by every passing wind.

That Turgenev was uncomfortable in his unbelief is certain. In his early forties he wrote to Countess Lambert on the occasion of her son's death: "He who has faith has everything and cannot lose anything, and he who does n't have faith has nothing; and I feel this the more acutely because I belong to the have-nots." In another letter of condolence written the same year he observed that the naturalness of death was far more terrible than its suddenness or strangeness. Religion alone could conquer the fear of the end. "But religion itself," he concluded, "must become a natural need in man; and who does not have it can only turn away his eyes frivolously or stoically (it is really the same)." Fifteen years later he expressed virtually the same sentiment when he wrote to Pisemsky:

My observations of recent years have led me to the conviction that spleen, melancholy, hypochondria are nothing but forms of the fear of

death. Of course, with every year it's bound to grow. There is no radical cure for it, but there are palliatives. If the religious feeling is, as you say, beginning to grow upon you, I congratulate you on this precious acquisition. It is a sure remedy, only it's not within everybody's reach.

The years failed to bring him into any haven of spiritual security. He fashioned himself no staff of faith upon which to lean. Though he shared Viardot's anti-clericalism, he was far from being, like this friend, a militant atheist. Though he secretly found his positivist diet somewhat meager, he kept to it. Though he did a little dabbling in spiritism when it was fashionable, even to the extent of attending séances, and showed in a few of his minor writings an interest in the supersensuous order of things, he never took refuge in mysticism. The one definite element in his attitude toward his putative Deity was aversion from any rigid set of dogmas such as Tolstoy erected for himself. When it came to God, as he had told Herzen long ago, he agreed with Faust:

Who dare express Him?
And who profess Him:
I believe in Him?
Who, feeling, seeing,
Deny His being
Saying: I believe not?

In this connection it is relevant to consider what Turgenev wrote in 1875 in answer to a request for a statement of his views, tendered by a lady whose son had to prepare a school theme on the subject, "Turgenev's Philosophy":

I shall say briefly that I am, above all, a realist, and chiefly interested in the living truth of the human face; to everything supernatural I am indifferent, and I don't believe in absolutes and systems; I love freedom better than anything, and so far as I can judge I am sensitive to poetry. Everything human is dear to me, Slavophilism is alien, and so is all manner of orthodoxy.

It was only after death put a seal upon the intercourse between the two men that the survivor became truly reconciled to the man

from whom he so radically diverged. Tolstoy continued to feel that there had been no body to their personal relations; Turgenev, he submitted, had loved no one except the women with whom he had been in love. At the same time he acknowledged Turgenev's implicit faith in goodness, and the candor which led him to "turn his soul inside out" in his books. He understood then the worth of the work which was Turgenev's immortal residue. Where a Dostoyevsky, so Tolstoy wrote, was like a valuable racer, but of a skittish temper and with a secret fault that must sooner or later land his rider in a ditch, a Turgenev was like a stout, sound horse that could be depended upon to get one to one's destination.

CHAPTER XXXIX

PHŒNIX LOVE

THE expatriate might prolong his visits home, and even timidly entertain the thought of settling in Russia, but in the end he always returned to France. It was not that he felt closer to the friends he had made there than to those he left behind. After all, he complained, there was n't a house in Paris where he could spend an evening informally. Nor was he drawn thither by the more abundant creature comforts which a Western cosmopolis could provide. As the years went by, his apartment came to have an unkempt air about it. When he was lying ill in a Petersburg hotel room during his penultimate visit to Russia, an admirer who came to cheer him up found his pillow-case "dirty beyond belief" and the curtains full of dust. "Dust," the patient observed, "is as natural on curtains as dew on grass"; he had n't noticed it, and he said his people in Paris would n't have noticed it, either. The previous year a Russian friend, coming to the rue de Douai to take him out to lunch, found his bedroom in disorder at two o'clock and the bed not yet made. In the study, "a layer of thick dust covered the small closed piano and the music upon it. One end of the shade was torn from the roller and hung lopsided, and apparently had been thus a long time, since a layer of dust was in its folds."

Turgenev himself showed some signs of neglect. "He wanted to button his coat . . . and he felt for the button; not finding it, he moved his hand to the next buttonhole, but the corresponding button hung by a thread attached to the lining, which was peeking through a hole. He smiled good-humoredly, threw up his hands and wrapped the coat around himself." On the way downstairs they passed a door from behind which came a strong contralto. Turgenev seized his friend below the elbow and cried: "What a voice—still!" They had their lunch, and Turgenev was gay and interesting, chatting of Daudet and Zola, and only dropping to a grave tone on the subject of matrimony. But suddenly he was all eagerness to get away: "Mme. Viardot's daughter is ill in bed. Perhaps I am needed to get the doctor or to run to the chemist."

His periodic excursions into Russia were merely leaves of absence from the Viardots. They were "his own people," apart from whom he could not live. Away from them, he talked of them often and wrote to them regularly. As the girls grew into matrons, and had children of their own, he became increasingly attached to them through his grandfatherly interest in the babies. He found a bulletin about the health of Didie's little girl better reading, so he said, than the most absorbing magazine article. As for the child's grandmother, he had long since ceased to be swayed by the passion for her which had once made him unwilling to alter by a single dot her homely, fascinating face. But he was bound to her by that network of cumulative habit, residual sentiment, and accepted obligation which his unofficial, incomplete marriage, like most marriages, had in the end become.

It was a strong bond. So curious was Turgenev's subjection, that one of his Russian friends did not hesitate to speak of his state as that of a hypnotic. Otherwise, how could the man, summering with complete contentment at Spasskoye, exclaim apprehensively: "What if Mme. Viardot should call me; then I would have to go. I could n't help it." People repeated to one another that the enchantress treated their Turgenev cruelly: when she was cross with him, she would make him don a fool's cap with bells and put him in a corner, and when he spoke Russian she would scream: *"Assez de votre langue barbare!"* Even his intimates at home, who

could laugh at such absurd gossip, were naturally jealous of this foreigner who had ravished their great man. Knowing how they felt, he could not resist on occasion teasing them a little. If he had to choose, he said, between being the greatest literary genius in the world, but not seeing the Viardots, and being their porter should they settle at the end of Nowhere, he would choose the place of the porter.

Now and then he did chafe under the chains. He felt somewhat left out in the cold. There were moments, he submitted, when he would give up all his fame in exchange for having some one to scold him for being late when he returned to his desolate rooms. As things were, he might stay away a day, or two days, with no one to remark it. Life moved a little too quickly for him in Paris. He complained that nobody loved him, he envied his married friends openly; as for him, he had "neither wife nor mistress, not a single woman whom he could call his own." He was always advising young men to get married. "You can't imagine how hard a lonely old age is," he said, repeating his time-worn phrase, "when against your will you must sit on the edge of another man's nest, receive kindnesses as alms, and be like an old dog, who is not chased out only because the master has grown accustomed to him and pities him." It was now over thirty years since he had confided to Mme. Viardot that at Courtavenel he felt like an unhappy dog sitting shabbily on his haunches.

He would sometimes hold up his large plump hand, sparsely covered with black hairs, and stick up his short thumb: Could a man with so weak a will as this brief member signified, divorce himself from such an old association? But if he could not bring himself to break away completely, he did stray afield now and then. Aside from casual flirtations with women dazzled by his fame, which have left no traces, there were, in the last decade, two affairs which played havoc with his unwearied old heart.

In June, 1874, when he was laid up with gout at Spasskoye, a certain Baroness Vrevsky, an attractive woman in her early thirties, came to spend five days with the invalid. He had become acquainted with her about a year previously, and although Julia Vrevsky's eagerness to show kindness to people in need

of it must have come to his notice before this, her acceptance of his invitation was something of a pleasant surprise. The visit, he wrote to her, left a deep imprint upon him, and made him feel that she had become a part of his life. Back in Bougival, he did not forget those days. "I keep thinking," he wrote to her from there, "that if we had met when we were young, inexperienced and above all, free—end the sentence for yourself." An exchange of letters followed. There was something, he insisted, that tied the two of them together. He had liked her at first glance, then there was a temporary quiescence, and after that came her visit to tighten the bond. He wrote her:

> And don't you get it into your head to cut or untie the knot. What for? Alas, no harm can come of it, either to me, or, for that matter, to you. . . . I 'd like to spend a few hours with you in your room, sipping tea and looking at the patterns on the frosted windows—but what nonsense! looking, of course, into your eyes, which are very beautiful, and now and then kissing your hands, which are also very beautiful, although large. But I like such hands.

They must arrange a meeting shortly: if they don't come together soon, they will only do so when they are old and it 's all over with them. She must remember that if she is thirty-three, he is fifty-seven. A month earlier he had suggested that they meet in Karlsbad, *im wunderschönen Monat Mai,* a romantic season, if taking the waters was a prosy business. It would seem that they did have a reunion at the watering-place, and when he returned to Bougival, he wrote to her that he had found all "the ladies who owned him" in fine fettle, while he himself was in fair condition, except that he was aging so rapidly that within a year he would be "a moral mushroom"; he had been a physical one this long time. And some weeks later: "I feel that I am getting old,—'as I have often said in jest,' to quote the poet,—and it 's no cheerful prospect. Quite the contrary. I do awfully wish, before the end of everything, that I might have my fling; will you help me?"

She did not help him. Although the baroness was a restless, adventurous spirit, and had an unconventional way of obeying her generous impulses, she held to the moral standards of her world.

Besides, she was just then seriously contemplating a trip to the East, which she had been dreaming of for some time. She was a woman with a taste for the exotic, rare in her generation. Turgenev had no desire to see her vanish into the dangerous distance. He admitted that it might be interesting to go to India at that time, when the Prince of Wales was on his way there too, but he begged her to resist the temptation and remain near him. His fears were groundless. The baroness's circumstances having changed, she found herself settled on the Neva, instead of wandering up and down the Ganges. And by June, 1876, he was again sitting with her in her Oriental drawing-room in Petersburg. Soon after their meeting there he wrote to her:

> And you still consider it necessary to soothe me and beg me not to be afraid, and you promise not to get me into trouble. I assure you that there is as little in common between me and Joseph as there is between you and Potiphar's wife. What I am afraid of is cholera, and not charming women, especially when they are as kind as you. Alas! I cannot be compromised, nor can I compromise any more, if I ever could.

But the serenity of their relation was occasionally ruffled for him, he confessed, by the teasing and futile realization that she was a young pretty woman.

Feeling that a frank statement of his position was in order, he gave it in a letter written eight months later:

> When I first met you, I loved you as a friend, and at the same time I had the persistent desire to possess you. This, however, was not so irresistible—I was no longer young—as to make me ask for your hand. Besides, there were further reasons which stood in my way. At the same time I knew very well that you would not agree to what the French call *une passade* [a temporary connection]. That explains my behavior.

That these further reasons had had to do with Mme. Viardot is hardly to be doubted. Having thus made matters plain to the lady, he went on to say that he looked forward to a deep friendship, untroubled by any carnal fret, as soon as his years allowed him to regard her as a person, rather than as a woman. "But now," he

submitted, "I still get hot and somewhat frightened at the thought: and what if she should press me to her heart in an unsisterly fashion?"

A fortnight passes, and he writes: "There is no doubt that some time ago, if only you had wished—but alas! now the time is gone, and all that is necessary is to endure the transitional period before sailing into the haven of old age." Sixteen years earlier he had said the identical thing in almost the identical words, and as far as tranquil friendship with a woman was concerned, the haven of old age was as distant now as it had been then. In the same letter he mentions two bits of gossip: one, about Count Sologub, the casual companion of his youth, a man four years his senior, who now, in his repulsive old age, has deserted wife and children for a young woman; the other, concerning a certain marquise, who is living her own life. He is far from condemning either. "Ah," he concludes, with the wistfulness that companioned his fear of life, "if only we had had the courage . . . a few years ago!"

On April 19, 1877, he was informing the baroness that he hoped to see her in Petersburg within two weeks. Before the fortnight was over, Russia had declared war on Turkey and, gout interfering, he was afraid he might not find her when he got there: she was going to the front as a sister of mercy. He did manage to see her once that spring. He never saw her again. She died of typhus early in the war in the most tragic circumstances. "The Poems in Prose" include a tribute to her memory, flat, and sincere.

Turgenev wrote this piece in September, 1878. Half a year later he was in the Alexandrinsky Theater in Petersburg watching a performance of his play, "A Month in the Country." The leading lady, Mme. Savin, was a woman of twenty-five, who, like Pauline Viardot, had black eyes and hair and beautiful hands, and, like her, had been virtually born on, and certainly to, the stage. The revival of this piece was a triumph. The playwright received thundering ovations as he stood bowing from his box: he refused to appear before the curtain, because, as he said, he did n't want to be thought of as a dramatic author. The next day he went to call on the actress. She was flattered by his

admiration, but hurt when he showed himself surprised that such fine acting should be done by a Russian, and by an unschooled, self-taught woman at that.

His enthusiasm for her art—he compared her to Rachel—was soon complicated by another sentiment, which he described in a letter sent to her in November from Bougival, as "that tender, half-fatherly, half . . . other feeling." In his subsequent letters, of which there were many, he kept referring, after his usual manner, to her "dear, pretty hands," and kissed them very tenderly and very long. During his next visit to Petersburg, in 1880, he made a point of seeing her again, and often enough to write her after his departure for Moscow, "I feel now that you have become something in my life from which I shall never part." And three days later, "I think of you often, oftener than I should. . . . I love you." When he was a boy his mother had told him: "You do not know how to love." She might with equal truth have said, "You will never know when to stop falling in love."

In May young Mme. Savin went South to Odessa for an engagement. Turgenev, who was then at Spasskoye, had hoped to see her there, but was only permitted to accompany her in the train for a short time, leaving her at the Oryol station. On returning to his lonely house he sent her long letters, in which he reviewed the incidents of their brief trip together, and embroidered humorously upon his impulse to snatch her from the train at Oryol. For that hour in her compartment, this white-bearded man of sixty-two had felt "like a boy of twenty." But, he admitted ruefully, in a phrase that was one of his private clichés, this was "the last flare of the lamp." Alas! now he would never be, as she put it, "her sin." He could n't explain even to himself the feeling this warm-lipped laughing girl aroused in him. "Am I in love with you? I don't know. Formerly it was different with me. This insurmountable impulse toward union, toward complete self-surrender, where everything earthly is lost in some fine fire. . . . I probably talk rot, but I would be unspeakably happy if . . . if . . ." But he felt that now such thoughts were vain. The door that so short a time back had seemed to him half open, with "something marvelous and mysterious behind it," was now banged shut forever.

During the summer they saw each other in Paris. But as she was accompanied by a man who was soon to become her second husband, even the ghost of their old intimacy was absent. She was, however, a woman who could not easily forego the admiration of so great a celebrity as Turgenev, and she gave him just the requisite amount of encouragement. He continued, in his letters, to kiss her hand lingeringly and to tell her that he loved her. Indeed, with arrant disloyalty to the ladies who "owned" him, he assured her, "I know of no hands pleasanter to kiss than yours." She sent him, at his request, a cast of one of them.

And then, when he went back to Russia for what was to be his last visit, he had the happiness, not granted him by Pauline Viardot, of welcoming the lady to the ancestral home at Spasskoye. She saw, as Pauline was never to see, the alleys of the old park, which he evoked in his letters, with its "rural odors and bird-notes, its sleepy sunlight and shadow, and two hundred acres of rye waving all around." His friends, the Polonskys, who were spending the summer on his estate, had never seen the host in such a flutter of happy excitement and hospitable activity as during the five July days she was with them. He arranged a village festival, and the dancing of the peasant girls soon drew the spectators, including the actress, and even the master, into the jig. One warm night, when the garden was heavy with fragrance, he sat on the balcony with his guests and read them "A Song of Triumphant Love," which he had just completed. The moved voice of the reader, the majesty of the night, the dance of moths lured to the candles from the dark fields, lent this hour a palpable enchantment. On another evening, after a late supper, as the guest of honor recalls, they all wandered out into the park to listen, at the host's invitation, to "the voices of the night."

One day he took her into his study, seated her in an arm-chair, and read her one of his "Poems in Prose." It was a piece which he had not included among those to be published; indeed he said he would burn it, not wishing to utter a reproach from beyond the gates of death. It was entitled "To Her," and was an apostrophe to a woman loved for a lifetime with a love she never understood. "You, who have plucked all my flowers," ran one phrase which remained in the listener's memory, "you will never come to visit my

grave." Whether or not the "poem" was as vapid as this approximate quotation suggests, it seems certain that it was only an old man's grumbling.

Turgenev's attachment to the actress was strengthened by her visit to him. His happiest memory connected with it was of the dinner served on the balcony to celebrate the wedding anniversary of the Polonskys, when, after the champagne, she gave him "a radiant and burning kiss." It "nearly singed him," he said, and the thought of it made his head swim. When Mme. Savin required, he slipped readily enough into the part of her "best friend," becoming her confidant, and advising her in her rather confused and hectic affairs of the heart. He also counselled her on matters of diction, as he had been wont to advise Pauline Viardot on her acting. Sometimes, however, he allowed his fantasy to paint him in a more personal rôle. He imagined the two of them drifting down a canal through the mild Venetian October, or sauntering arm in arm through the streets of Rome, visiting galleries, churches, gardens, dining vis-à-vis, sitting side by side at the play, and then . . . "there my imagination halts respectfully. Is it because what follows must be kept secret, or because there is nothing to keep secret?" There are passages in these communications which recall his early love-letters, but there is also the old man's resignation to the fact that youth calls to youth.

The spring of 1882 found him incurably ill, and when, in those gray days, he received a letter from the actress, it was to him "like a petal fallen upon the surface of a muddy stream." He saw her that season in Paris, but he did n't expect to see her again. He was, he wrote to her, in the position of old Lemm in his novel, "A House of Gentlefolk," the worn and wasted music-master who in the evening of his days cherished an unconfessed devotion toward the exquisite young Liza. Mme. Savin's second marriage took place that summer, and he sent her his blessing. At the same time he insisted that she insure her freedom to pursue her stage career.

He wrote to her almost to the end, and even though he was a ruin of a man, and reduced by his weakness to mere penciled scrawls, he wrote with ardor. He recalled regretfully the fact that it had been Polonsky and not himself who, on her visit to Spasskoye, when she

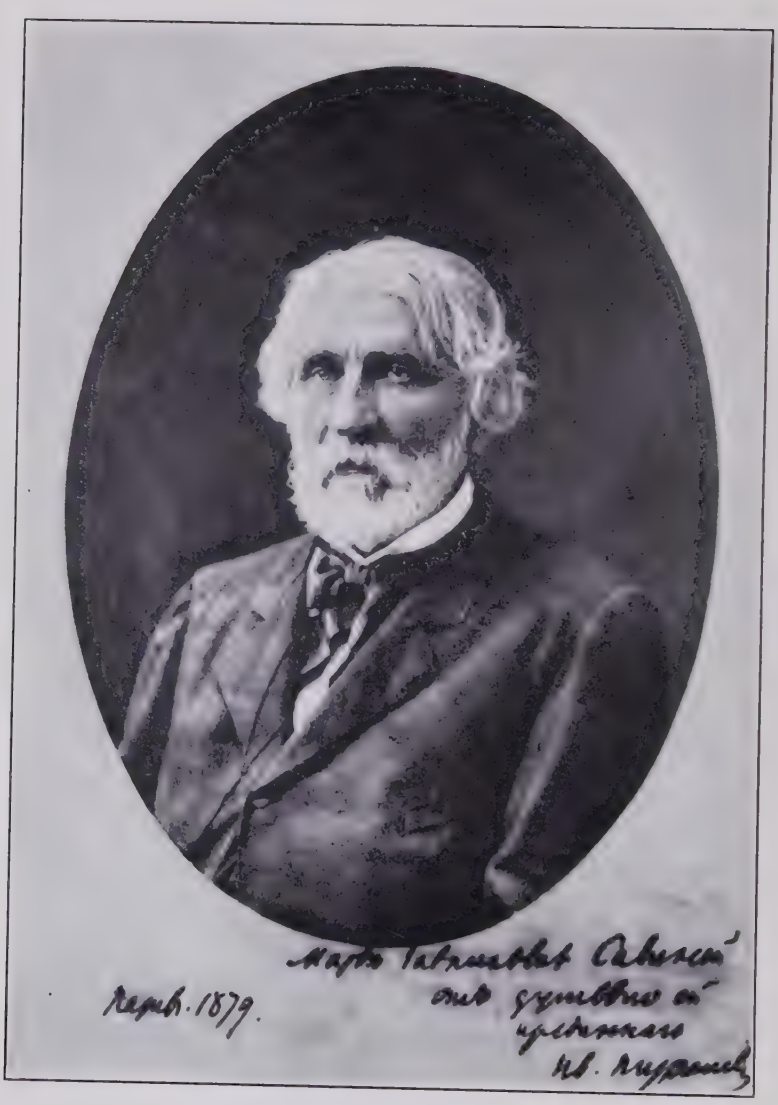
was bathing in the pond, had involuntarily played for a moment the part of the elders spying upon Susannah. He placed the recollection of those few days as Spasskoye upon the best shelf of the archives of his memory. In his final letter, written February, 1883, he chided her for forgetting him, and said he would cherish the same feeling for her to the last.

Eleven years earlier this man had heard Gautier, who was to die shortly, complain that he felt like one already dead. Turgenev had commented that he himself was conscious of an imperceptible odor of decay that clung to him as a faint odor of musk sometimes haunts a room. He gave as the reason for this the fact that love was no longer possible for him. In the course of his visit to Yasnaya Polyana in May, 1880, he confessed to his hostess that he had stopped writing because he could only work when he was in love, and since those days were over, the days of his writing were over, too. He made a similar confession to Tolstoy. As a matter of fact, he went on writing to the very end, and likewise kept to the end youth's prerogative of falling in love. The man was still capable of feeling the fine frenzy, and the artist was curiously drawn to it, as one leans closer to warm himself at a dying fire. Indeed, "Clara Milich," his last literary work, has for its single theme the mightiness of love.

Clara, the heroine of this beautifully wrought narrative, is a young actress, an intense and single-minded virgin, who falls passionately in love with a monkish and apparently frigid youth. He repulses her advances, chiefly because he is afraid of life, and she poisons herself on the stage, as a Russian actress had actually done, for romantic reasons, in November, 1881. After her death he becomes fascinated by her tragedy, in which he is so closely involved. The fascination is morbid in more senses than one. The dead girl literally takes possession of him, and in the end he consents to die, that he may thereby unite himself with his disembodied mistress eternally.

Turgenev's treatment of the supersensuous is, as usual, heavy-handed. The transports which the young man enjoys with his ghostly bride are no more ethereal than those experienced by any human lover. The author is careful to suggest a realistic interpreta-

tion of the preternatural elements of the tale, though his own bias seems to be in the other direction. It is as if he were trying to tell himself, without really believing it, that man does not altogether perish; that, if love be sufficiently strong, it can give the familiar, warm, humanizing colors even to the yonder side of the grave; that the heat which belongs to youth can burn beyond bodily existence.



Turgenev in 1879
From a photograph given by him to Mme. Savin

CHAPTER XL

"I AM TIRED"

F you juggle the figures in 1881, you get 1818, the year of Turgenev's birth. Seeing an omen in this, he believed the prediction that death would come to him on October 1, 1881. Its coming was, however, delayed two years. As a matter of fact, at the end of 1881 he was feeling, by his own account, "as well as a fish," and even doing a little work. In collaboration with Pauline Viardot he translated "The Song of Triumphant Love" into French and wrote the sketch, "A Reckless Character." He crossed the English Channel again, and found an abundance of game, but all too often his hand and eye played him false. He was guest of honor at a banquet arranged by Ralston, who, he observed maliciously, hoped thereby to augment his reputation as an authority on Russian affairs. His letters of these months are rather cheerful and full of lively comment on sundry subjects, including Sarah Bernhardt, who was then being acclaimed by the Petersburg public, and whom he violently detested.

The new year began pleasantly, but by February he was entering a cloud of troubles. For one thing, his darling Marianne had a belated confinement which proved very difficult. Then old Viardot, whom he considered as solid as a granite rock, and who, so he said, was taken for his son when they went walking together—old Viardot came down with a stroke. To make a bad matter worse, his

own daughter ran away from her husband and threw herself upon her father's mercies for protection. He had to conceal her whereabouts from the rascally Bruère, and engage in long and costly legal proceedings. His life, he sighed, was in the yellow leaf.

And yet his health was remarkably good, what with mitigation of the gout, and only occasional irregularity of the heart-beat to remind him that he was mortal. On March 6, he sat at dinner with Goncourt, Zola, and Daudet—Flaubert being in his grave. In spite of themselves, they kept returning to the topic of death all through the evening. Turgenev surprised them by taking a new stand. Yes, death was a familiar thought, he admitted, but when it came, he thrust it aside, like this—and he waved his hand in a gesture of dismissal. When a Russian is caught in a blizzard he says: "Don't think of the cold, or you 'll die." It seemed as if, drawing closer to the end he had so long envisaged, he was learning to put the idea away from him. In 1878 he had written a lyric, his last, in which he commanded his "dear friend" to let the sunlight enter his room and place musicians behind the door as he lay dying. Did he remember that his mother had mixed her last breaths with the strains of a polonaise?

Before March had run its course he was attacked, without warning, by a mortal illness. The great Charcot diagnosed it as angina, and he was put on his back for an indefinite period. His first act, when he became aware of his condition, was to summon Annenkov from Baden to Paris by telegram, for help in the final disposition of his literary property. As once before, Annenkov, instead of being received by a moribund invalid, found Turgenev so keen and lively that it seemed as though the calamity were a dream of the doctors and the patient. But it was harsh reality. Turgenev was conveyed to Les Frênes, when the Viardots moved there for the summer, but any more extensive traveling was out of the question. Illness had clamped the irons of expatriation on him permanently, and all he could have of Spasskoye was a spray of lilac inclosed in a letter. But his enforced immobility was an even harder burden to bear. The months rolled by, and still he lay abed, unable to move, or even stand—"a motionless Something," "the patriarch of the molluscs," as he called himself. He was put on a milk diet,

which did him good, and incidentally made him, so he said, more moral than he was by nature. By September he was well enough to turn his invalid table into a desk, and complete the writing of "Beyond Death," the story which was subsequently published under the title "Clara Milich."

He looked forward to another twenty years of this vegetative existence, and worked out a philosophy of resignation, based upon what he called "cheerful despair." He compared himself to a man stone-deaf or completely blind, who, being without hope, is secure from disappointment. He set forth these precepts for people in his position: "One should meditate on the past, satisfy the demands of the present, and never think of the future. To live in peace one must never undertake anything, never propose anything, not trust any one, and not fear anything." If he could not budge, at least he could sleep at night, and after all, why should one move?—don't oysters live? Perhaps to keep sane, he busied himself with small things; for example, advising Polonsky, who was summering at Spasskoye, to dry out the wine-cellar so that his Bordeaux should not spoil. In the evening there was whist, and sometimes a little music; that was something to anticipate during the long hours of the day. And then there were Didie's two little girls and Marianne's baby to relieve the gloom that now hung about Les Frênes, where he lay ill and old Viardot was dying. He had the best of care, as he assured his Russian friends, adding that his ladies would be insulted by an offer of outside assistance.

Another year rolled around, and 1883 was ushered in. In January, the last January he was to see, he was operated upon for a cyst which he nicknamed Feoktistov, after Russia's chief censor. The operation took place without anæsthesia, and he told Daudet, who came to visit him, that as he lay on the table he was thinking of what was left of the Five, analyzing his pain and trying to find the right word to describe to them his sensations as the steel entered the flesh: it was "like a knife cutting a banana." He might lose the use of his legs, and forgo all hope, but the literary instinct which he had disavowed so often was inextinguishable. Two weeks after the operation he had recovered from its effects, and said that he felt so well that he could dance—if he could only walk.

Suddenly the disease took a puzzling turn for the worse. By March he was in the grip of inhuman agonies, which were only posthumously recognized as due to cancer of the spinal cord. What with the tortures he had to endure, and the morphia he was given to dull the pain, he became deranged. He screamed so that he was heard in the street. He wanted to die. He wanted to kill. He pleaded for poison. He complained that all these people around him were "conspirators," plotting to put him out of the way. He dictated irrational telegrams which betrayed his persecution mania. "Why do you put chains on me?" he asked the Russian ambassador as he stood at his bedside. One night he pulled his bell-rope so hard that several members of the household ran in to him, and when he saw Mme. Viardot he hurled the brass ball of the bell at her, crying out, "Ah, there is Lady Macbeth!"

While he was tossing from one crest of suffering to another, old Viardot breathed his last. Turgenev mourned him less than he envied him. After the funeral the family took their remaining patient back to Les Frênes with them for the summer. It was now May. For a while he had relief. He had survived the tempest, but it was the mere shell of his former self that came to shore. Seeing Annenkov after an interval of twelve months, he began to cry, and Annenkov had to struggle to keep back his own tears. The details of his delirium had bitten like acid into his memory, and the inveterate litterateur promised himself to put his experiences into writing, if he ever took up his pen again. "I was at the bottom of the sea," he told Annenkov, "and I saw monsters and foul creatures tangled together which nobody has as yet described because nobody has survived the spectacle."

He hated himself for the way he tormented his ladies when he was in pain. Mme. Viardot was so good, so patient. One day he begged her to throw him out of the window.

"But my dear Turgenev," she remonstrated, as with a child,—she sometimes thought of him as one,—"you are too large, and too heavy, and besides, it would hurt you."

He could not help smiling at that. As soon as he drew a free breath his sense of humor revived. He mimicked with all his old vivacity the righteous indignation of the old-fashioned Russian

woman doctor of whom, among others, he had begged poison. Nor did he lose interest in his literary protégés. Unable to hold a pencil, he dictated a letter of recommendation to accompany the manuscript of a young author, which he was sending to Russia.

The definitive edition of his works was his chief preoccupation during these months. He astonished Stasulevich, who came to consult with him on the matter in August, by the practicality of his judgment and an unwonted firmness. Having taken care of his literary remains, he arranged for the disposal of his poor bones. He wished, he said, that he might lie at the feet of his master, Pushkin, but that he did not deserve, just as none of his works had deserved to be dedicated to the poet's memory. Let them lay him beside his old friend and teacher, Belinsky. Stasulevich tried to dismiss the matter with a joke. He pointed out that the Volkov cemetery (the Russian counterpart of Père Lachaise), where Belinsky was buried, was in very bad condition and might be condemned, in which case Turgenev would have to resume his travels even in his coffin. He had previously deposited securities with the Viardots, the interest on which was to go to his daughter's maintenance. His personal estate was, naturally, to go to Mme. Viardot, and he provided that his land should be sold, and the proceeds turned over to her, since, being inherited property, it could not, according to Russian law, be willed to anyone outside of the family. But the testator's habitual procrastination made the document invalid in the end, for his signature was never certified by a notary.

The novelist's condition was one of the topics of the day in Russia. His prestige there had been hurt by "The Song of Triumphant Love." Many people took it as evidence of his complete alienation from Russian life, and some friendly souls even tried to read into the piece an allegory which would give it a civic import. But more recently he had rehabilitated himself with the short sketch "The Threshold," which was circulated in manuscript copies because, since it canonized the revolutionists, it could not have passed the censor. It has to do with a Russian girl who stands on a threshold beyond which lies a darkness that promises, as she well knows, only an anonymous martyrdom, lonely and perhaps vain, and who, crossing it, is hailed by two voices, one crying, "Fool!"

the other, "Saint!" It was generally believed that he wrote the poem in memory of Sophie Perovsky, the heroic girl who paid with her life for her part in the assassination of Alexander II. After Turgenev's passing, the terrorist party was to issue a proclamation claiming him as one of theirs, and on his bier was to lie a wreath from those buried alive in the Russian prisons for their political faith, with the inscription, "From the dead to the deathless."

There were conflicting bulletins in the Russian newspapers about the progress of his illness and there was more than the usual amount of gossip as to how he was neglected by his foreign friends. It is true that he lacked the atmosphere of intense public sympathy which would have braced and supported him had he been in his native land. But, as a matter of fact, the "old carcass," as his trained nurse casually referred to him in a letter, had the best of care.

In the summer he received a tender letter from Tolstoy:

The news of your illness . . . upset me terribly. When I became convinced that it was serious, I realized how much I loved you. I felt that if you should die before me, it would hurt me deeply. . . . Perhaps all this is hypochondria and the lies of the doctors, and we shall yet see each other again at Yasnaya and at Spasskoye, please God. When I first came to believe, I hope without cause, that you were dangerously ill, I had the idea of going to Paris to see you. Write or have some one write me definitely and in detail about your condition. I will be very grateful. . . . I embrace you, dear man and cherished old friend.

Turgenev managed to hold a pencil long enough to scrawl a reply:

Dear and beloved Lev Nikolayevich, I have not written to you for a long time, as I have been ill, and am, to speak frankly, on my death-bed. I can't recover, and there 's no use thinking of it. I am writing to you just to tell you how glad I am to have been your contemporary, and to make a last request of you. My friend, return to your literary work. That gift of yours comes from the same source as all else. How happy I would be, if I thought that my request would influence you. . . . I am a doomed man. The doctors do not even know what to call my complaint. *Nevralgie stomacale gouteuse.* I can neither walk, nor eat, nor sleep. It tires me even to mention all this. My friend, great writer of the Russian land, heed my request. Let me know whether you receive this sheet, and permit me once more closely,

closely to embrace you, your wife, and all yours. I can no more. I am tired.

This, his last letter, was widely circulated, and the title "great writer of the Russian land" was always to shadow Tolstoy, to his displeasure.

During these tortured final months, when the once ample contours of Turgenev's personal life shrank and withered, his fundamental devotion to writing came to the surface like the bones in an emaciated face. During a respite, which occurred in June, he dictated a piece which recalled in detail one of the most vivid, if not most glorious experiences of his youth: the fire on the boat that was taking him from Russia to Germany, when he was a nineteen-year-old lad. And then, a fortnight before the end, as Mme. Viardot related at length in a letter, he called her to his bedside and with tears in his eyes—he cried easily now—asked her to do him a favor which no one else could render.

"I 'd like to write a story which I have in my head, but that would tire me too much; I could n't do it."

"Well—" she understood him at once—"dictate it to me. I don't write Russian fast, but still I think that with a little patience on your part, I shall be able to manage."

"No, no," he said. "If I dictate it in Russian, I shall stop at every word, every phrase, to choose my expression, and I don't feel capable of so exhausting an effort. No, what I would like to do is to dictate the story to you in the various languages that we both know, using the expressions that come to me most readily, and you put it into French."

They set to work according to this plan, and after a few sessions, she showed him her final version, with which he was delighted. This French text was translated into Russian a few years later by his friend Grigorovich. It is the story of the degenerate scion of a noble Russian family gone to seed, who becomes a horse-thief. On one occasion the wretch is nearly torn to pieces by incensed peasants, a lynching, the author observes, which would not have had "the excuse of the sentiment of justice which is, in some measure, in the heart of every American." The tale concludes with the narrator coming upon the mutilated corpse of the well-born rogue, and

the piece is with double fitness entitled, "An End." In thus exemplifying the decline of the class to which he himself belonged, Turgenev seemed to be saying to the new social order, *Morituri te salutamus.* It is appropriate, too, that his last story should suggest, as far as such an unauthentic product could, his first manner, that of "A Sportsman's Sketches." It was as though his art had described a full circle, and returned again to its origins.

And yet even now his thoughts were not wholly retrospective. He kept returning to his plan for another big novel. He was so well pleased with the collaboration on the short story that he suggested to Mme. Viardot that they begin preparatory work on the large piece. "But alas!" Mme. Viardot concludes, "his condition grew worse, and he could do no more than dictate the names of the characters."

His sufferings could not alter the gusto for writing which he had so often tried to deny. They had, further, a certain compensatory feature: their cumulative effect was to destroy in him his ancient fear of death. As early as February, hearing that the author of *Meistersinger* had died, he was writing: "That Wagner should make his escape upon the first attack of an incurable illness, is another sign of his unfailing luck. I know people who envy him." He wrote to Polonsky in May, "My thirst for death is growing, and all that 's left me is to beg that you on your part should desire the granting of your unhappy friend's wish." He told the painter Vereshchagin that he called upon death a hundred times a day, and was not afraid to face it. He begged Maupassant, who came to see him five days before the end, to make himself his friend by giving him a revolver; none of the family would consent to let him have one. Physically, the giant had shriveled to a thin waxen image of his old self. His eyes were sunken, his limbs were sticks. "How can one live," he asked, "with legs like a grasshopper's?" The tenement was no longer habitable, and he was ready to abandon his lease.

Often, just before waking consciousness is blotted out, the drowsy mind leans for a moment upon a single image, which is like the first stile on the borders of sleep. And it may well be that before all consciousness ceases, the mind turns its back on nothingness

and rests briefly upon such a soothing image. If this was Turgenev's experience, what detained his fading awareness? Was it some scene of these latter days, or some quiet memory floating out of the past?—his mother's bonneted head nodding over her game of patience; a gray and green-gold vista of silken grass and lindens; Stankevich's gnarled fingers beside Chouchou's at the piano; a little red Moscow church with green cupolas; the corner house on the Nevsky where he had first met Pauline Viardot; Didie in the bow-window at her easel; a sunburnt old peasant woman holding a pot of unskimmed milk, beaded with dew; Tolstoy astride a log, bobbing gravely up and down; the broken rusty prow of the old galley in the museum at Ventnor, with the inscription *Giovane Speranza?* He had asked a similar question in one of his "Poems in Prose": "What shall I be thinking of when I come to die?" Would it be of how he had let the years go by, taking the least of their gifts, and seeing their scorn too late? Would it be of the rare good hours, the few loved faces? Would old mistakes and misdeeds foreclose upon his last moments? Or would he be wondering what, if anything, awaits the dead? No, he concluded, rather would his mind take up some trivial thing, as if trying to look away from the advancing dark.

On the last day of August, a Friday, Louise came into his sick-room, and he seemed to recognize her, but his mind was badly befogged.

"Look, Louise!" he exclaimed; "look, how strange: my leg is suspended over there in the corner. The room is full of coffins. But," he added, with a sly glance, "they have given me three days to live."

It fell out that he spoke the truth. Toward the end he was unconscious most of the time. On Sunday he came to himself, and began to talk. But it was only a compatriot who chanced to be in the room, and, in some measure, Pauline Viardot, who understood him, for the words he spoke were neither in the language of his "second Fatherland" nor in that of his adopted family, but in the language of his wet-nurse and the serf who had first chanted verse to him in the Spasskoye park. At one point he turned to Didie's husband and assured him repeatedly that he loved him.

"You must believe me," he said. "Kiss me in token of it. I believe you; you have such a fine Russian—yes—Russian face."

To Marianne, who knelt beside his bed, he gave instructions as to how she should bring up her boy. Neither Chamerot nor Marianne understood a syllable of what he was saying. He reached out, as though in an effort to embrace them all, his eyes moving from face to face:

"Come nearer, nearer. Let me feel you close to me. The moment has come to take leave, like the Russian czars."

For a second he seemed to recognize Mme. Viardot, and became alert: "There 's the queen of queens," he said. "How much good she has done!"

The words of the plain folk began to come to his lips. It was as though he imagined himself a dying peasant, bidding his household farewell. Then his speech became more and more broken and finally ceased. Early Monday afternoon he began to breathe heavily. His hands were warm to the touch. He lay quiet. It was two o'clock. He stretched out his arms for the last time.

"The first day," Mme. Viardot wrote in a letter to Pietsch the same week, "the frown left by his sufferings, together with his immobility, gave him a severe and energetic look. The second day he resumed his kind and gentle appearance; at moments one would have said he was going to smile."

Turgenev is not known to have written any inscription for his monument. Had he chosen to do so, it is not impossible that he might have allowed words like these to be graven as his memorial:

EPITAPH

HERE INDIFFERENT EARTH COVERS ONE WHO LOVED THE LIGHT ABOVE THE EARTH, AS IT SHINES UPON ALL THAT IS VOWED TO DARKNESS, BUT CHIEFLY AS IT ILLUMINES THE HUMAN FACE; ONE WHO ABHORRED ALIKE BRUTE NATURE AND BRUTE MAN; ONE WHO LAUGHED AT THE FOOL, SCORNED THE COWARD, AND DECRIED THE SLAVE HOUSED IN HIS OWN FLESH; ONE WHO WORSHIPED THE SELFLESS MAN, EXALTED THE TEMPERATE, AND TRUSTED THE ENLIGHTENED; ONE WHO, BEING A SKEPTIC, COULD NOT ACT, YET, BEING A CITIZEN AND A POET, MUST SPEAK; ONE WHO, ERRING MUCH, KNEW NO FULFILMENT, SAVE IN HIS ART, BUT FELT NO ENVY, SAVE OF THE YOUNG; A MAN WITHOUT ALLEGIANCE, EXCEPT TO REASON, WITHOUT FAITH, EXCEPT IN BEAUTY AND VIRTUE, WITHOUT A FIRM CONSCIENCE, SAVE WITH RESPECT TO THE CRAFT HE PRACTISED FOR FORTY YEARS; ONE WHO SOUGHT, SO FAR AS HIS AGE AND HIS PEOPLE COULD REVEAL IT, TO KNOW AND UTTER THE TRUTH WHICH SETS MEN FREE.

THE END

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